EXCLUSIVE! TOP-SECRET J.LO PHOTOS INSIDE

BLENDER

BLENDER

★ "DEAR MISTER FANTASY, PLAY US A TUNE" ★

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MUSIC AND MORE

"I'M NOT A WALKING SOAP OPERA!"

JENNIFER LOPEZ TAKES ON THE HATERS

U2

EVERY CD RATED AND REVIEWED

MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE

"WE'RE HERE TO FIGHT EVIL"

SPECIAL REPORT

ROCK STARS: THEY'RE FREAKIN' NUTS!

P.30, 32, 36, 44, 66, 89 AND 152

WATCH BLENDER AND VH1'S

25 HOTTEST ROCK & ROLL GIRLFRIENDS

FRIDAY, APRIL 1

DATING TIPS FROM 50 CENT

APRIL 2005
BLENDER.COM

CADILLAC.COM

YOU HAVE A SCREW LOOSE Let's see what we've got in the toolbox. 400 hp. A commanding 5.7L V8. Massive 14-inch Brembo brakes. And a startling 0-60 of 4.6 seconds. That'll straighten your head out. **Cadillac CTS-*V***

BREAK THROUGH

©2005 GM Corp. All rights reserved. Break Through® Cadillac® Cadillac badge® CTS® *V*-Series logo®

iriver™

~ Vivid color display
~ Displays your digital photos
~ PlaysForSure enabled to play more music
~ With Napster™ To Go, fill and refill your player
~ Plays up to 150 hours of digital music
~ Elegant, lightweight design
~ Simple touch control

playsforsure
Windows
Audio

www.iriveramerica.com

iriver | H10 5GB†

works with napster

†1GB equals 1 billion bytes, not all memory space available for file storage.iriver is a registered trademark of iriver Limited in Korea and/or other countries and is used under license. All other brand and product names are trademarks of their respective companies or organizations.

Featuring

Christina Milian, Black Eyed Peas,
Baby Bash, James Brown,
Earth, Wind & Fire, Kool & The Gang

& many more

in stores now

TVT

Metro Goldwyn Mayer
TRADE MARK

Hear it now at TVTrecords.com

DIARY OF A LEGEND

Ozzy Osbourne

Prince Of Darkness

THE FIRST CAREER-SPANNING BOX SET COLLECTION FROM ONE OF THE ARCHITECTS OF METAL.

4 CDs of hits, b-sides, rarities and oddities including 1 CD of newly recorded songs!

Special deluxe packaging includes 60-page color book with rare photos, memorabilia plus notes and reflections written by Ozzy!

Get a FREE Ozzfest 2005 ticket with purchase!
Buy one ticket get one free offer. Limited Offer!!!
Details at ozzynet.com.

In Stores Tuesday, March 22

AVAILABLE AT BEST BUY

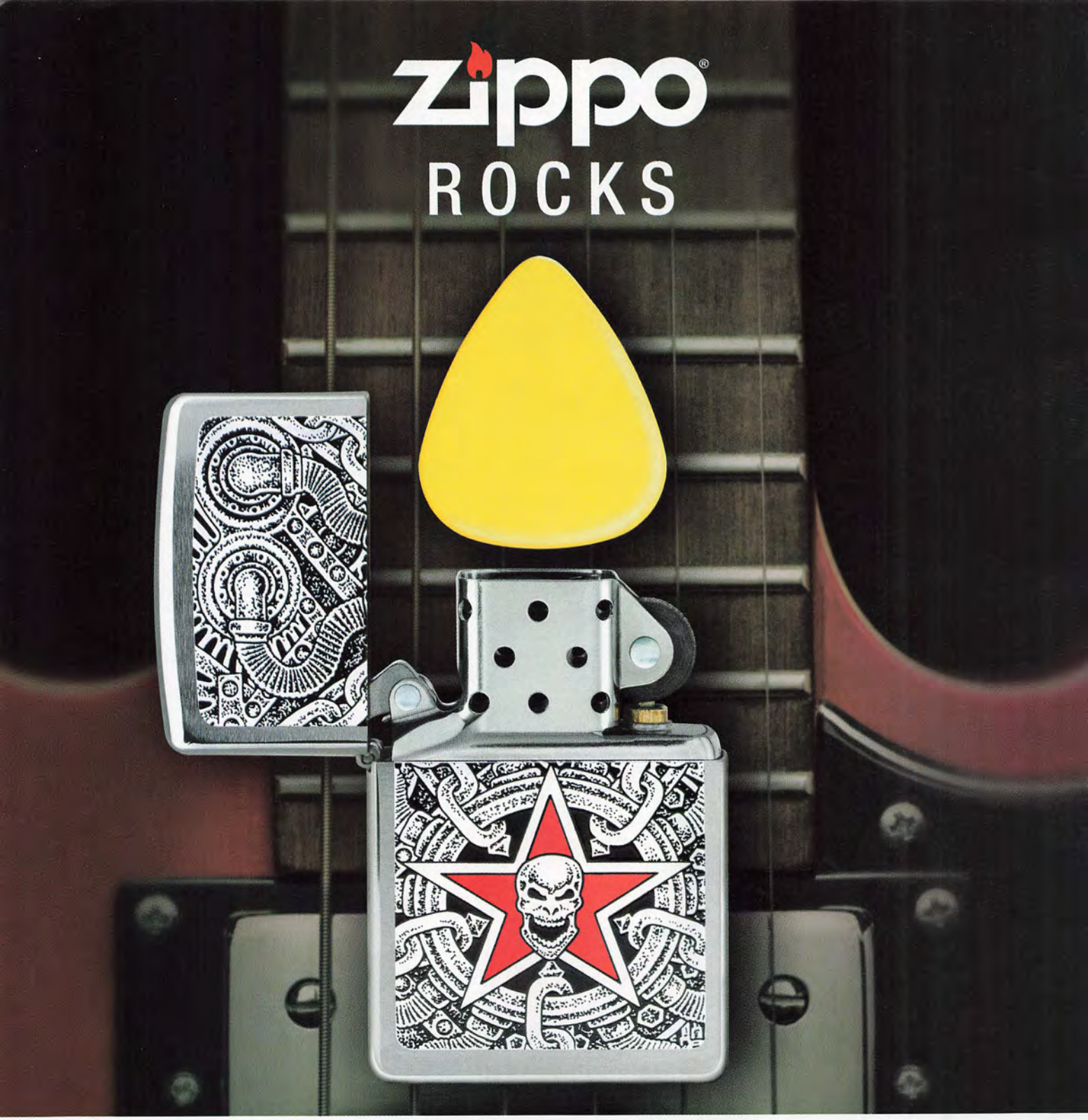
Thousands of Possibilities GET YOURS

Win a limited edition signed litho from Ozzy at OZZYNET.COM

OZZY.COM EPICRECORDS.COM

EPIC

"EPIC" AND REG. U.S. PAT. & TM. OFF. MARCA REGISTRADA./© 2005 SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT



The fans choose the bands on the 2005 Zippo Hot Tour, as unsigned local rockers battle it out online and on stage in selected cities nationwide. The winner gets an A&R showcase with Capitol Records, a new equipment package and an opening spot with a national headliner this November. For more details on breaking the next big band and the chance to win cool prizes, visit zippohottour.com.

Zippo HOT TOUR

Capitol. ESP PEAVEY TAMA pro-mark purevolume www.purevolume.com DiscFarm.

BLENDER
APRIL 2005

FEATURES

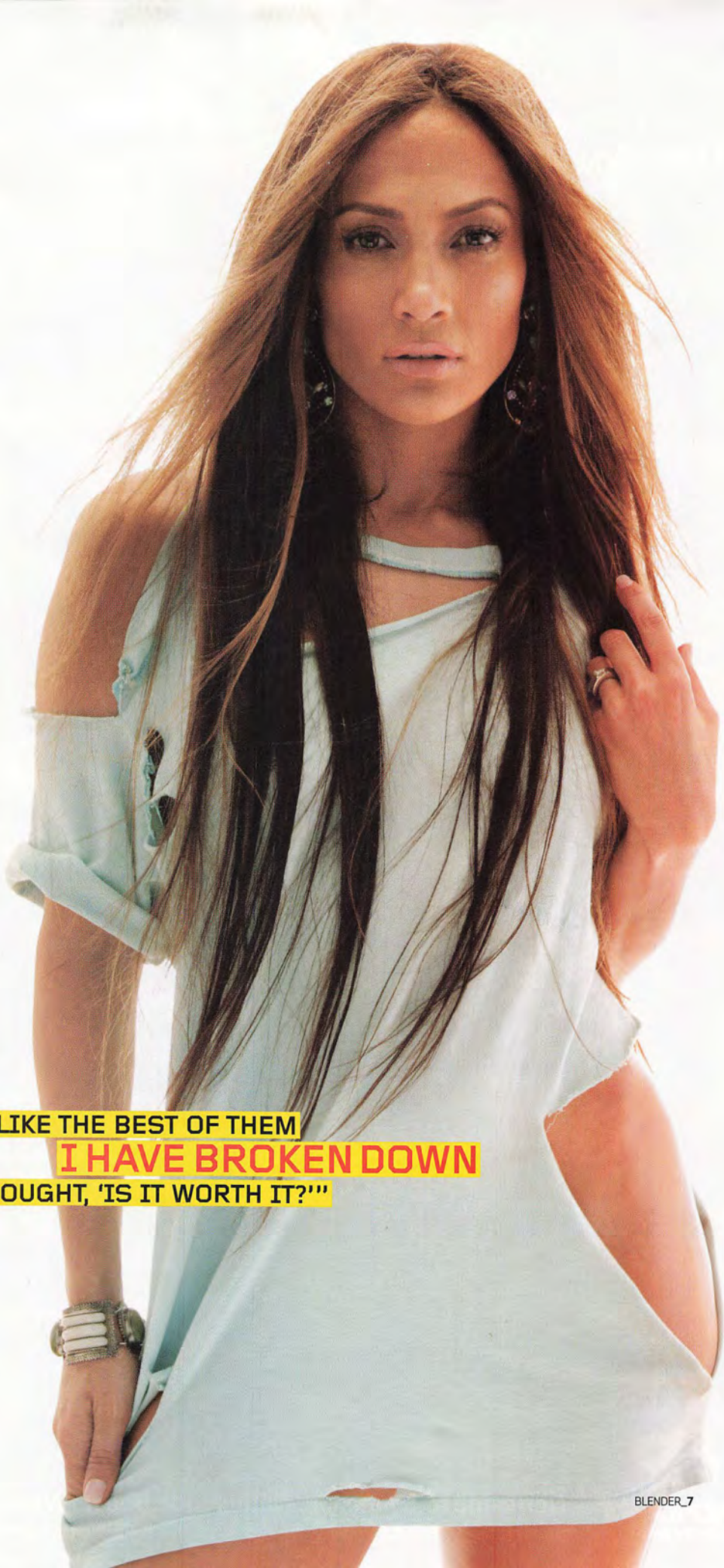
74 **JENNIFER LOPEZ**
Tired of being a talk-show punch line and a tabloid staple, and happy with a new man, two new albums and two upcoming films, Jenny From the Block is back and ready to rumble.

89 **ROCK'S WORST DRIVERS**
Musical talent is, alas, no guarantee of hand-eye coordination on the road. Who's more dangerous behind the wheel: Keith Richards, Billy Joel or Vince Neil? You decide!

92 **MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE**
How a bunch of mild-mannered Jersey boys transformed into a superpowered band of death-goth-punk rockers on a crusade to fight evil (and cause consternation to parents) across the nation.

96 **$848: THE BLACK EYED PEAS**
Blender invites the hip-hop sensations to partake in the sport of kings, i.e., blowing all their money at the track.

99 **SPECIAL: DIGITAL MUSIC GUIDE**
Let *Blender* hold your hand as we walk you through the dazzling world of high-tech gadgets. Plus: three lucky readers get awesome upgrades!



74

"LIKE THE BEST OF THEM I HAVE BROKEN DOWN AND THOUGHT, 'IS IT WORTH IT?'"

ON THE COVER

JENNIFER LOPEZ

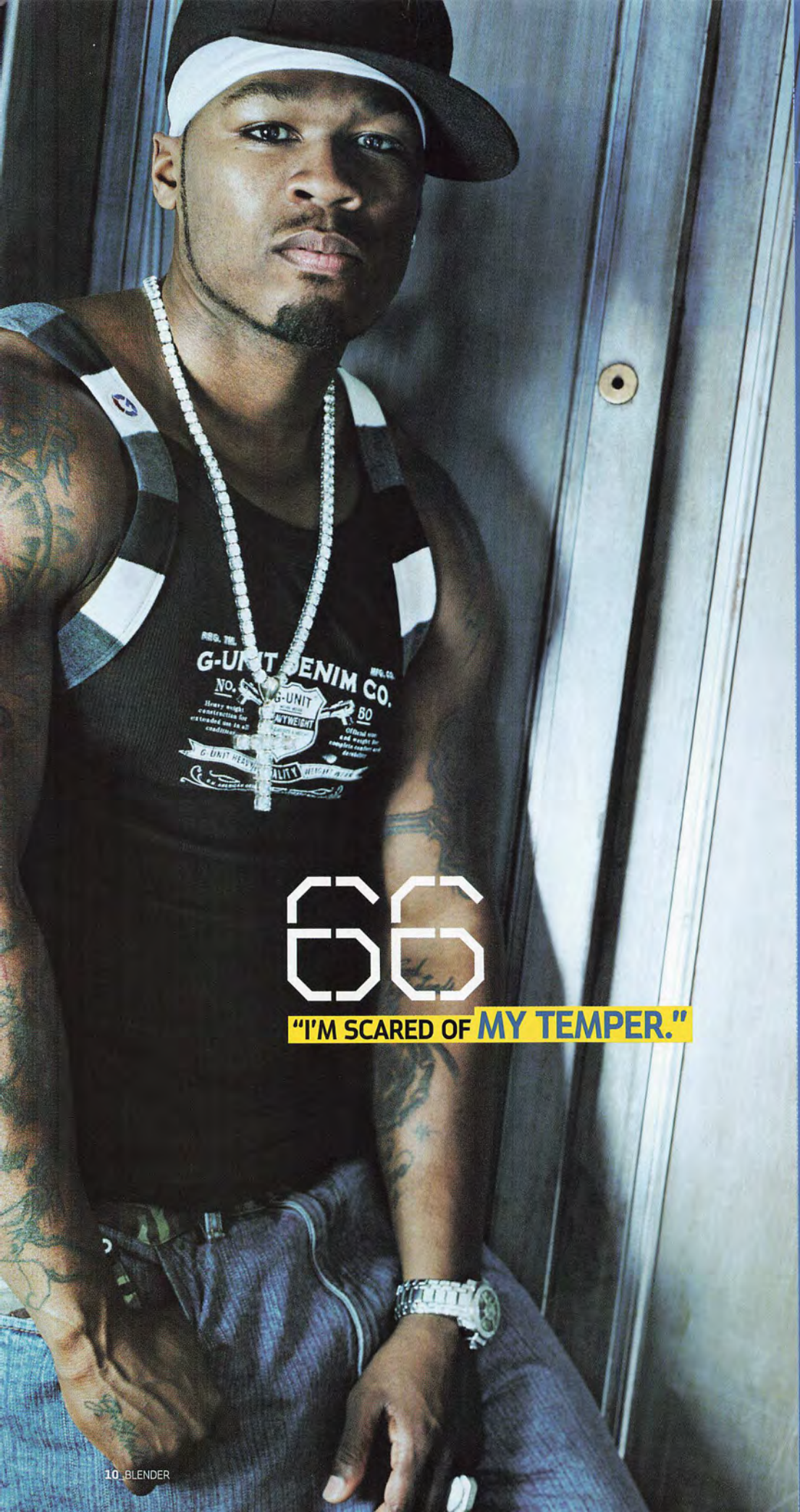
PHOTOGRAPHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR *BLENDER* BY **MARC ANTHONY**

SET DESIGN BY JOHN MILLHAUSER. STYLING BY BRITT BARDO CRAWFORD. HAIR BY ORIBE. MAKEUP BY MATTHEW VAN LEEUWEN FOR AVANT GROUPE. MANICURE BY APRIL FOREMAN FOR VARNISH/CLOUTIER. STYLIST ASSISTANT: LAUREN TAFURI.

COVER: MACRAME BODY SUIT BY ROBERTO CAVALLI. DIAMOND CHAINS, RING (RIGHT HAND) AND EARRINGS BY NEIL LANE. CUFF BRACELETS BY CHROME HEARTS. JEANS BY TRUE RELIGION. INSET (PAM ANDERSON): ROBIN PLATZER/FILM-MAGIC.COM. SPINE: PETER MAZEL/SUNSHINE/RETNA LTD.

"Where You At?™"
Chicago
MOTOROLA i930
boost mobile
Northside to Southside. Nationwide Boost™ Walkie-Talkie
Boost Mobile™ Pay-As-You-Go. No Contracts, No Bills, No Hassles. 888-BOOST-4U.

© 2005 Boost Worldwide, Inc. All rights reserved. BOOST, BOOST and Logo, Where you at? and logo, BOOST MOBILE, BOOST MOBILE and Logo, and the Logo are trademarks and/or service marks of Boost Worldwide, Inc. MOTOROLA and the Stylized M Logo are registered in the US Patent & Trademark Office. All other product and service names are the property of their respective owners. © Motorola, Inc. 2005.



CONTENTS

APRIL 2005

REGULARS

20 **LETTERS**

148 **CROSSWORD**

152 **WHO DOES BILLY IDOL THINK HE IS?**
And just how long *has* he been wearing those leather pants?

30 **BURNER**
Irv Gotti goes down, the Foo Fighters build their own studio and Britney adjusts her chakras. Plus: Lil Jon gets dirtier.

34 **THE NEXT BIG THING**
Brooke Valentine; the Kills

INSIDER

55 **25 HOTTEST ROCK & ROLL GALPALS**
It's good to be a rock star. See why millions of adolescent boys take guitar lessons, with our jaw-dropping gallery of beauties best known for gracing the limousines of rock's top talents.

64 **MY MUSIC: NEIL PATRICK HARRIS**
Yeah, he used to be Doogie Howser, but he's a cool guy, really. The former child star walks us through his record collection and talks about taking ecstasy and sawing women in half—but not at the same time.

66 **DEAR SUPERSTAR: 50 CENT**
Is hip-hop's incredible hulk really just a big sweetie? Well, he loves his grandmother and wants to "kick it" with Martha Stewart.

70 **THE GREATEST SONGS EVER**
It took guts to write a "feel-good" rap song in the wake of the L.A. riots, but that's just what Ice Cube did with the classic cut "It Was a Good Day."

72 **ASK BLENDER**
Green Day, the Jackson 5, Twista and the Red Hot Chili Peppers

GUZMAN: TANK AND JEANS: G-UNIT

Drink Responsibly.

INTRODUCING SMIRNOFF TWISTED V™ BLACK CHERRY

Contains no fruit juice. ©2005 SMIRNOFF TWISTED V Premium Malt Beverage. The Smirnoff Co. Norwalk, CT.

SMIRNOFF Twisted V™

WARNING
THE MAKERS OF NEW TAG BODY SPRAY WILL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY BREACH OF LOCAL CUSTOMS WITH REGARD TO "GETTING IT ON." FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY, CARRY CARD BELOW.
©2005 TAG Fragrance Co.

POCKET TRANSLATOR
"NO SIR, I DID NOT HAVE FOREIGN RELATIONS WITH YOUR DAUGHTER."
FRENCH
Mais non, monsieur, je n'ai pas eu de relations étrangères avec votre fille !
ITALIAN
Nossignore, non ho mai avuto rapporti con sua figlia.
GERMAN
Nein, mein Herr, ich habe keine Auslandsbeziehungen mit Ihrer Tochter gehabt!
SPANISH
¡No señor, no he tenido ningún tipo de relaciones exteriores con su hija!
TAG
BODY SPRAY FOR MEN
CONSIDER YOURSELF WARNED.
TAG
BODY SPRAY FOR MEN
LUCKY DAY

Introducing TAG Body Spray for Men. Uniquely designed to attract the ladies.

CONTENTS

APRIL 2005

THE GUIDE

110 **NEW RELEASES**
Mars Volta, the Game, Daft Punk and more

128 **TOP 40 CHART**

130 **REISSUES**
The Kinks, David Bowie, Dinosaur Jr. and more

138 **BACK CATALOGUE**
U2

140 **LIVE!**
Gang of Four

141 **BOOKS**

142 **MOVIES**

144 **DVDS**

146 **GAMES**

152

"ANYBODY WHO'S OVER 30 AND ENGLISH IS KINKY."

ARTIST INDEX

WHERE TO FIND YOUR FAVORITE PERFORMERS IN THIS MONTH'S *BLENDER*

BLACK EYED PEAS, losing over $800 of our damn money 96
BLOOD BROTHERS 91
CHARLATANS, THE inducing vomiting 36
DINOSAUR JR. 132
DMX pretending to be a Fed 90
ELECTRA, CARMEN wears less makeup than Dave 60
EMINEM 28, 32, 42
50 CENT his ideal first date 69
FOO FIGHTERS playing drunken ping-pong 40
GAME, THE dating show appearance 36
GOTTI, IRV 30
GREEN DAY 72
HARRIS, NEIL PATRICK 64
HILTON, PARIS 38, 42
ICE CUBE 70
IDOL, BILLY visits to bondage clubs 152
JOEL, BILLY 32, 89
KLUM, HEIDI 60
LIL JON "nice-sized dicks" 32
LOPEZ, JENNIFER photos by Marc Anthony 74–86
MOON, KEITH 91
MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE 92
NEIL, VINCE 91
QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE 110
REED, LOU cuckolding 72
ROSE, AXL dogs that look like 24
SNOOP DOGG 48, 51
SPEARS, BRITNEY visits a strip-mall healer 42
U2 138
VON TEESE, DITA 58
YO LA TENGO 135

LEGO, PANTS BY SKKN

CAUTION: 245 HORSEPOWER

SIDE EFFECTS MAY INCLUDE HOOTING, HOLLERING, WHITE KNUCKLES, SPINE TINGLING, INCREASED HEART RATE AND SWEET GIRLFRIEND. IN CLINICAL TRIALS, MOST FREQUENTLY REPORTED ADVERSE EFFECTS INCLUDED JEALOUSY AND ENVY AMONG FRIENDS PLUS MISAPPROPRIATION OF SICK DAYS. INDIVIDUAL RESULTS MAY VARY. USE ONLY AS DIRECTED. KEEP OUT OF REACH OF SMALL CHILDREN.

MOTOR TREND®
2005 TRUCK OF THE YEAR

TACOMA *2005 MOTOR TREND TRUCK OF THE YEAR.* With an available awe-inspiring 245-hp V6, 282 lb.-ft. of torque and the TRD Off-Road Package, it's no wonder the all-new Toyota Tacoma is a force to be reckoned with. **toyota.com**

Vehicles shown with available equipment. ©2005 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

AMERICAN PIE meets PULP FICTION... with a dash of A CLOCKWORK ORANGE

DVD SPECIAL FEATURES

- Audio Commentary
- Screenplay and more...

AVAILABLE EVERYWHERE!

R

Strong Violent Content, Sexuality, Language and Drug Use

Supplemental Materials Not Rated

DISTRIBUTED EXCLUSIVELY BY image ENTERTAINMENT

© 2004 Halfway House Entertainment, LLC. All Rights Reserved.
© 2004 Image Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

BLENDER

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MUSIC AND MORE

EDITOR IN CHIEF Craig Marks
GROUP CREATIVE DIRECTOR Andy Turnbull
MANAGING EDITOR Adam Bell

EDITORIAL

MUSIC EDITOR Rob Tannenbaum
SENIOR WRITER Clark Collis
SENIOR EDITORS
Pauline O'Connor, Victoria DeSilverio
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Jonah Weiner
REVIEWS ASSISTANT Josh Eells
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT Lauren Harris
EDITOR AT LARGE Adam Higginbotham

ART

DEPUTY ART DIRECTOR Andrew Ryan
SENIOR DESIGNER Martin Hoops

PHOTO

PHOTO EDITOR Tonya Martin
DEPUTY PHOTO EDITOR Michelle Egiziano
ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR Thomas Payne
PHOTO ASSISTANT Rory Walsh

PRODUCTION

COPY CHIEF Ian Wheeler-Nicholson
PRODUCTION MANAGER Courtney Lipman
RESEARCH EDITOR Gabe Soria

★

CONTRIBUTORS

Judson Baker, Johnny Black, Kenneth Cappello, Jon Caramanica, Nick Catucci, Douglas Century, Adrian Deevoy, Paul Du Noyer, Nick Duerden, Tony Duran, kris ex, Andrew Harrison, Hua Hsu, James Hunter, Steve Kandell, Greg Kot, Lego, Dorian Lynskey, Chairman Mao, Tom Moon, Sheryl Nields, Michael Odell, Perou, Ann Powers, Brendan Quigley, Jon Regardie, Jody Rosen, F. Scott Schafer, Karen Schoemer, William Shaw, RJ Smith, Justin Stephens, Alphonse Telymonde, James White, Douglas Wolk, Jon Young, Stephanie Zacharek

★

ADVERTISING

PUBLISHER Malcolm Campbell (212) 302-2626
SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER Christina Helms (212) 302-2626
ACCOUNT MANAGER Liz Gray (212) 302-2626
MIDWEST MANAGER Dave Nordahl (312) 440-3182
DETROIT DIRECTOR Nan Gerard (248) 723-1302
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA DIRECTOR Kelly Watson (310) 664-0368
NORTHWEST ACCOUNT DIRECTOR Catherine Hurley (510) 832-6672
SOUTHEAST MANAGER Jason Albaum (404) 531-6997
CORPORATE INSIDE SALES MANAGER Jessica Bunucci (212) 302-2626
MARKETING DIRECTOR Andrea Parr
MERCHANDISING ASSOCIATE Rachel Shapiro
PROMOTIONS ASSOCIATE Chad Meany
ADVERTISING SERVICES ASSOCIATE Anya Estrov
ADVERTISING INTERN Frances Yeager
MARKETING INTERN Jamie MacDonald
PUBLIC RELATIONS Four Corners Communications (212) 849-8250
NEWSSTAND DISTRIBUTORS The Curtis Circulation Company

Dennis

A DENNIS PUBLICATION

CHAIRMAN Felix Dennis
PRESIDENT AND CEO Stephen Colvin
CHIEF OPERATING & FINANCIAL OFFICER John M. Lagana
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Andy Clerkson
GROUP CREATIVE DIRECTOR Andy Turnbull
DIRECTOR Robert G. Bartner
INTERNATIONAL LICENSING DIRECTOR Kerin O'Connor 011-44 (0) 20-7907-6136
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT Jane Buchanan

GENERAL MANAGER, BLENDER.COM Roger Munford
GROUP FINANCIAL CONTROLLER Kevin E. Morgan
ACCOUNTING MANAGER Brian Thomas
DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL REPORTING Karen Reed
SENIOR FINANCIAL ANALYST Brian Kelley
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR Lou Terracciano
PRODUCTION MANAGER Aimee Leinhardt
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR Dina Passaro
SUBSCRIPTION MARKETING DIRECTOR Susan Tynan
NEWSSTAND MANAGER T.J. Montilli
CIRCULATION BUSINESS DIRECTOR James Buckley
OPERATIONS MANAGER Randy Siegel
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AFFAIRS Harry Kanner
DIRECTOR OF BRAND DEVELOPMENT Barry Pincus

Copyright © 2005 Dennis Publishing, Inc. Blender® is a registered trademark owned by Felix Dennis. All rights reserved.

April 2005 issue, Volume 4, Number 3. Blender is published 11 times per year by Dennis Publishing, Inc., 1040 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10018; Tel (212) 302-2626; Fax (212) 302-2635; Internet blender.com For subscription inquires: Call: 386-447-6319 or write to: Blender PO Box 420235 Palm Coast FL 32164 or email Blender@palmcoastd.com

DAVID STEEN/CAMERA PRESS/RETNA LTD. (BRIT EKLAND AND ROD STEWART, 1976)

Ben Sherman®

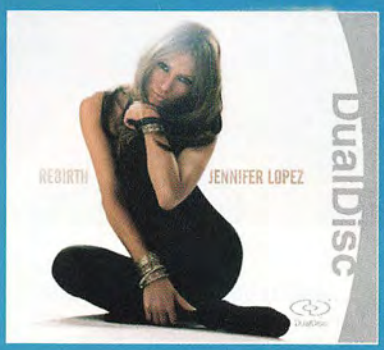
CARNABY STREET LONDON

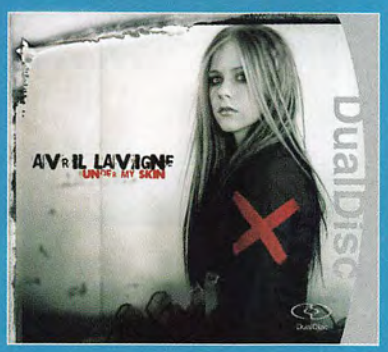
URBAN OUTFITTERS VIRGIN MEGASTORES

WWW.BENSHERMANUSA.COM

BLENDER.COM
NEW RELEASES
CONCERT REVIEWS
VIDEOS
CONTESTS
MUSIC NEWS
TOUR INFO
& MORE!
GET IT STARTED!
WITH WEB-ONLY PHOTOS OF THE
BLACK EYED PEAS
PLUS:
MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE
DAVID BOWIE
50 CENT
SEE HUNDREDS OF ARTIST GALLERIES! @BLENDER.COM

DUALDISC
NOW ONE DISC HAS IT ALL
MUSIC AND VIDEO IN ONE

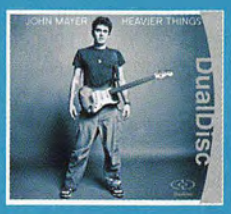


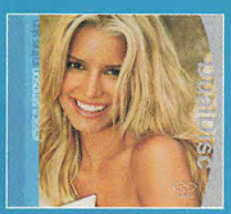


Introducing the two-sided disc with both music *and* video

Get the full album on the CD audio side.
On the DVD side get the entire album in enhanced audio (many in surround sound), videos, interviews, mini-documentaries, concert clips, web links, behind-the-scenes footage and more.

PUSH BUTTON





NEW DUALDISCS FROM FIVE FOR FIGHTING, TRAIN, USHER, LAMB OF GOD, CHEVELLE, DURAN DURAN, INCUBUS, MILES DAVIS, MERCYME, AC/DC, INDIGO GIRLS, NELLIE MCKAY, CROSSFADE, DAVID BOWIE, DESTINY'S CHILD AND MORE, COMING SOON!

2 SIDES. 1 DISC.
UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES.

DualDisc™

* visit www.sonybmg.com/dualdisc for more information

© 2005 SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

On Sale at

TOWER RECORDS®
Tower.com

You've Got Mail

WE WANT YOU TO SHARE . . .

DIRTY!

OK, so I think I've finally figured this out: The lyrics on the spine of the March 2005 issue are from "(I've Had) The Time of My Life" by Bill Medley and Jennifer Warnes, a song featured quite prominently in the film *Dirty Dancing*. I checked, and Medley and Warnes didn't die recently. Were you paying tribute to Jerry Orbach? Clever, *Blender*!

STEPHANIE AMEMAN, MANCHESTER, CT

KINKY!

Blender always gives the best advice with the last lyric on your back page. "Don't forget to dance/Don't forget to smile" is from the Kinks song "Don't Forget to Dance."

DON THOMAS, LOS ANGELES

THANKS FOR NOT DISSING ME!

I've read every issue cover to cover and I consider being anywhere on your "Best of" lists a great honor. I bought an issue at an airport on the way to a show. I saw "The Worst Songs of 2004," elbowed my wife, and said, "Watch this—I'm gonna take one on the chin." Then I saw my picture and my heart sank. But when I saw it was in the "Best" part, I did a little Fred Sanford dance right there in the security checkpoint line.

TODD SNIDER, NASHVILLE

MORE POOPINESS

Was the person who wrote in last month serious about naming their band Poopy Balls? After reading your "How to (Not) Name Your Band" piece, I decided to call my band that. I've even got the logo worked out!

NICK PARESEN, READING, PA

At this juncture we would like to remind all readers/prospective rock stars that the piece was called "How to *(Not)* Name Your Band."

CONGRATULATIONS TO MICHAELA SPAULDING OF MINOT, ND, **WINNER OF *BLENDER'S* MARCH CROSSWORD CONTEST**, WHO SCORED A JVC HOME THEATER SYSTEM.

LISTEN UP

BLENDER READERS: We want to hear from you. If we print your letter in our next issue, we'll send you the new iRiver iFP-790 flash-based MP3 player.

Send all correspondence to *Blender*, 1040 Sixth Avenue, 22nd floor, New York, NY 10018 Or: your2cents@blender.com.

Mariah Carey brightens up another dentist's waiting room.

SNOOP LOVES MARIAH

Snoop's favorite song while he was "behind bars" was "Vision of Love"? Do you think he told his fellow prisoners? I would guess admitting to liking Mariah Carey in jail might attract all sorts of the wrong attention.

DIANA HECKSCHER, TOLEDO

MARIAH—GROUNDED?

Thank you, William Shaw, for your thoughtful and revealing interview with Mariah Carey. Perhaps when people realize what she went through growing up they will appreciate just how talented and, given the circumstances, *grounded* she is.

ERIN GRAHAM, HUNTSVILLE, TX

DAVID CROSBY TALKS SNAP

Really enjoyed your feature on the "Greatest Rock & Roll Insults of All Time." But I was disappointed at the omission of David Crosby's unforgettable assessment of Jim Morrison: "If there were flower children, Jim was a mushroom child. Keep him in the dark and feed him shit."

LYDIA COLBY, BODFISH, CA

... AND SO DOES ROGER WATERS

What about Roger Waters's slam of (ex–Pink Floyd bandmate) Dave Gilmour? "I want people around me who are creative, lively, interested and interesting. Dave is none of these things."

JIM WAHRMAN, GILBERTSVILLE, NY

... AND SHARON OSBOURNE

"They toured with Ozzy, before they were the has-beens they are now." Sharon Osbourne on Korn.

BEN MULVILLE, UNION CENTER, SD

ARE YOU LISTENING, TED NUGENT?

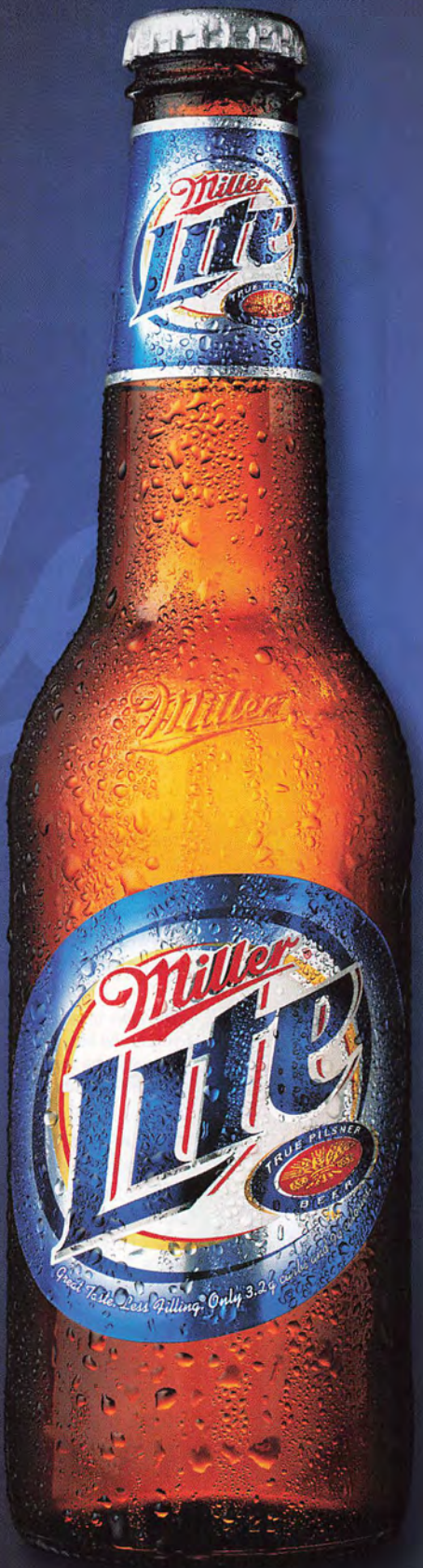
The last thing in the world I want to do is make a cheap point from one of the most tragic rock deaths ever. But, in the wake of "Dimebag" Darrell's shooting, it would be nice to think that his metal peers like Ted Nugent and Aerosmith will think twice next time they start talking about how great guns are. It's in poor taste that his fellow musicians wouldn't refrain from that talk and acknowledge the tragedy of his death.

SHAWN LEE, TROY, NY →

CAREY: JAMES WHITE

GREAT TASTE.
LESS FILLING.
HALF THE CARBS OF BUD LIGHT.

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE CARB CRAZE.



Great Taste. Less Filling.

Miller Good call.

Live Responsibly Miller

©2004 Miller Brewing Co., Milwaukee, WI

Michael Stipe made one pathetic birthday clown.

MICHAEL STIPE IS FUNNY!

Congratulations! As a fan of R.E.M. for now almost 10 years, I must have read hundreds of interviews with Michael Stipe, but the one he did with *Blender* in the last issue was by far the funniest and hopefully will, as is his wish, dispel the notion that he is "this solemn poet of the masses."

NATHAN GEORSEN, GILBERTSVILLE, NY

We'd like to take all the credit. But it was really between Stipe and the readers who sent in the questions. So we'll just take most of the credit.

HAIR APPARENT

Ludacris pic addendum: Shirt by Hilfiger, white T-shirt from Footlocker, jewelry and nose hairs Ludacris's own. I wanted to reach into the photo, yank them down and tie them together with some nice bling.

TOM LORIO, YONKERS, NY

HAPPY!

Kudos to your "Most Awesomely Mediocre Artists of All Time" feature. I haven't laughed so much since I heard the news that John Oates was releasing a solo album.

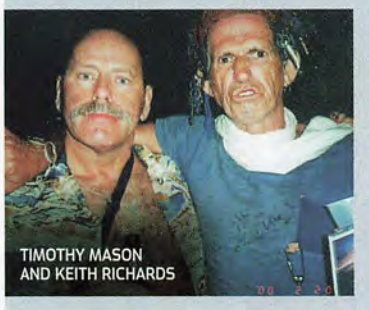
CAITLIN HEIBACH, NEW YORK CITY

SUPERFAN

BRINGING OUT THE STALKER IN YOU SINCE 2001

JOSH HELFGOTT AND BRITNEY SPEARS

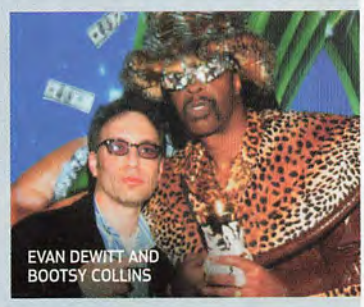
KATE MARRAZZO AND ROB ZOMBIE



TIMOTHY MASON AND KEITH RICHARDS

JANEL SPIEGEL AND MARIAH CAREY

LENNY KRAVITZ AND DEAN MERCIL



EVAN DEWITT AND BOOTSY COLLINS

NOT ONLY IS the HP Photosmart M307 Digital Camera sleek and stylish, it fits in your pocket—all the better to stalk your favorite pop star! Send us your pic, and if we print it, you'll get the prize!

Send entries to Superfan at *Blender*, 1040 Sixth Avenue, 22nd floor, New York, NY 10018

KIND OF HAPPY!

While I enjoyed your "Mediocre Artists" feature, was it really necessary to include such actually talented people as Art Garfunkel and Meg White along with Drew Lachey and Kevin f--king Federline?

AMANDA O'NEILL, RIGHTANGLE, KY

UNHAPPY!

I was beside myself with rage when I read your "Most Awesomely Mediocre Artists of All Time" feature. Okay, so I'm not about to defend the talents of Andrew Ridgeley from Wham!. But if such hugely successful and talented people as Art Garfunkel, Clarence Clemons and Sonny Bono are "mediocre," what does that make people who spend their time producing a crappy music magazine?

GARY STEVENSON, ST. PAUL

"Awesome"? Is that the answer? "Awesome"? Please say it's "awesome."

UTENSILS

My son arranged for some magazines to be sent to me because he had to use up earned points through credit card purchases. One maga- →

STIPE: SHERYL NIELDS

KEEP COOL ALL DAY.

©2005 P&G

Mötley Crüe: "Wow, so this is 'daytime.'"

zine was *Blender*. He thought it was about kitchen utensils. I'm 66 years old and not really in tune with the material presented. So, could I receive the CD player as a consolation prize? By the way, I take the magazine to my job and give it to the younger people. They love it!

ELAINE CARLSON, OMAHA

IF POP STARS WERE DOGS. . .

DOES YOUR DOG RESEMBLE A POP STAR?

Send us a photo with your name and address and who your dog happily resembles. If we print your photo, you'll win a Virgin Electronics Boomtube ex featuring two twist-off speakers and a unique bass tube!

PERCIVAL EDWARD AUSTIN
THE DOG

AXL ROSE
THE POP STAR

TOMMY TRIUMPHANT

Does anyone else find it strange that ex-jailbird, ex-wife beater, ex-junkie, ex-bad drunk Tommy Lee is, when you consider the alternatives, now the member of Mötley Crüe you'd most want to be?

LAURA COOKE, CLEVELAND, TN

DIMEBAG: RIP

When I heard about what happened to Dimebag I cried for a whole day. Now it's a week later and I still can't believe it happened. Pantera mean so much to me. I just keep on thinking: Why?

JAMES TOBIN, GEORGETOWN, CO

CRÜEL CRÜE

As much as I love Mötley Crüe—and as much as I will be lining up to see them—it seems cruel to their fans and themselves to go on tour given their assorted frailties and antagonisms.

TOM ELTON, MULLEN, NE

HEY JOE!

Please, please, please never ever ever put the words "Fat," "Joe," "athletic" and "sex" on the same page again.

LEAH ROSEN, DUBUQUE

Too late. But, hey, you've got only yourself to blame.

GIVE CHLOË SEVIGNY A JOB!

Re: Chloë Sevigny's "My Music" feature: How can someone who has such dubious taste when it comes to the movies she appears in (I still have nightmares in which I'm forced to watch *Julien Donkey-Boy* again) have such great taste in music? Morrissey! Can! Brian Eno! And she's right that *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* is inferior to pretty much everything the Stones ever recorded. You should give her a job reviewing CDs.

KENNY GARCIA, TRENTON

'Fraid not. We still can't forget the time we let Cameron Diaz write "Reissues in Brief." Only three stars for the Byrds' *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*? Preposterous!

"BLIND" WILLIE NELSON

For some reason the fact that Ray Charles believed blind people don't have to pay taxes brought to mind the image of Willie Nelson buying a pair of dark glasses and a cane.

MARC EISENREICH, KANSAS CITY, MO

KEVIN'S CONDOMS

I can't believe the fertile Kevin Federline hasn't gotten Britney pregnant yet. He must be triple-socking it.

MATTHEW MITCHELL, ALLENTOWN, PA

Is that a golfing term?

GONE BEFORE HIS TIME

I was disappointed and surprised to see ODB's obituary in your magazine so soon. According to the "When Will Your Favorite Pop Star Die?" evaluation you did (March 2004), he had a much longer life expectancy than 35 years. He will be missed.

JOEY ESTRADA, PETALUMA, CA

"BUBBLE" BOO BOO

I just received my first and possibly the most awesome *Blender* ever in the mail. Unfortunately, y'all listed the 19th Best Song of 2004 in December as "Bubble Pop Electric" by Gwen Stefani featuring André 3000. "Bubble Pop Electric" was with Johnny Vulture. The song that featured André 3000 was "Long Way to Go." Nonetheless, I love *Blender*.

NATHANIEL JOHNSON, MONTEREY, CA

"BOOBOO" BOO BOO

Yo. If you're going to quote Eminem, the illest MC in the game today, please don't misquote him! It's "Why do they Yoohoo? Pippity kaka-poopoo!" Not "dippity gaga-booboo!"

JUSTIN SHERILL, LOCUST, NC

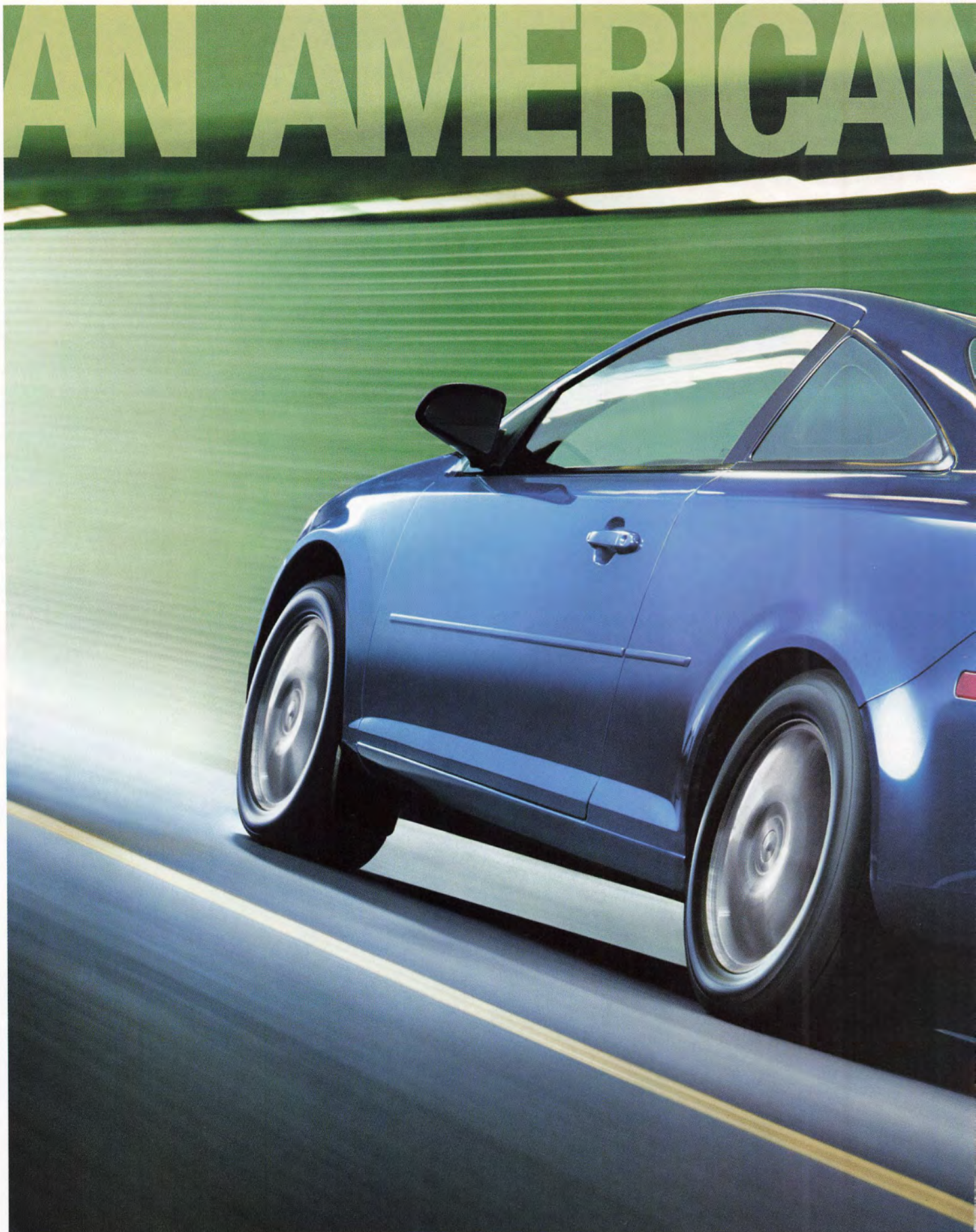
SHOCKER: ADAM WEST ISN'T REALLY BATMAN!

Gee, Ashlee Simpson and Lindsay Lohan don't actually sing? What revelation are you going to hit us with next: Adam West doesn't really solve crimes at night wearing tights?

KATY CATENZARO, SACRAMENTO

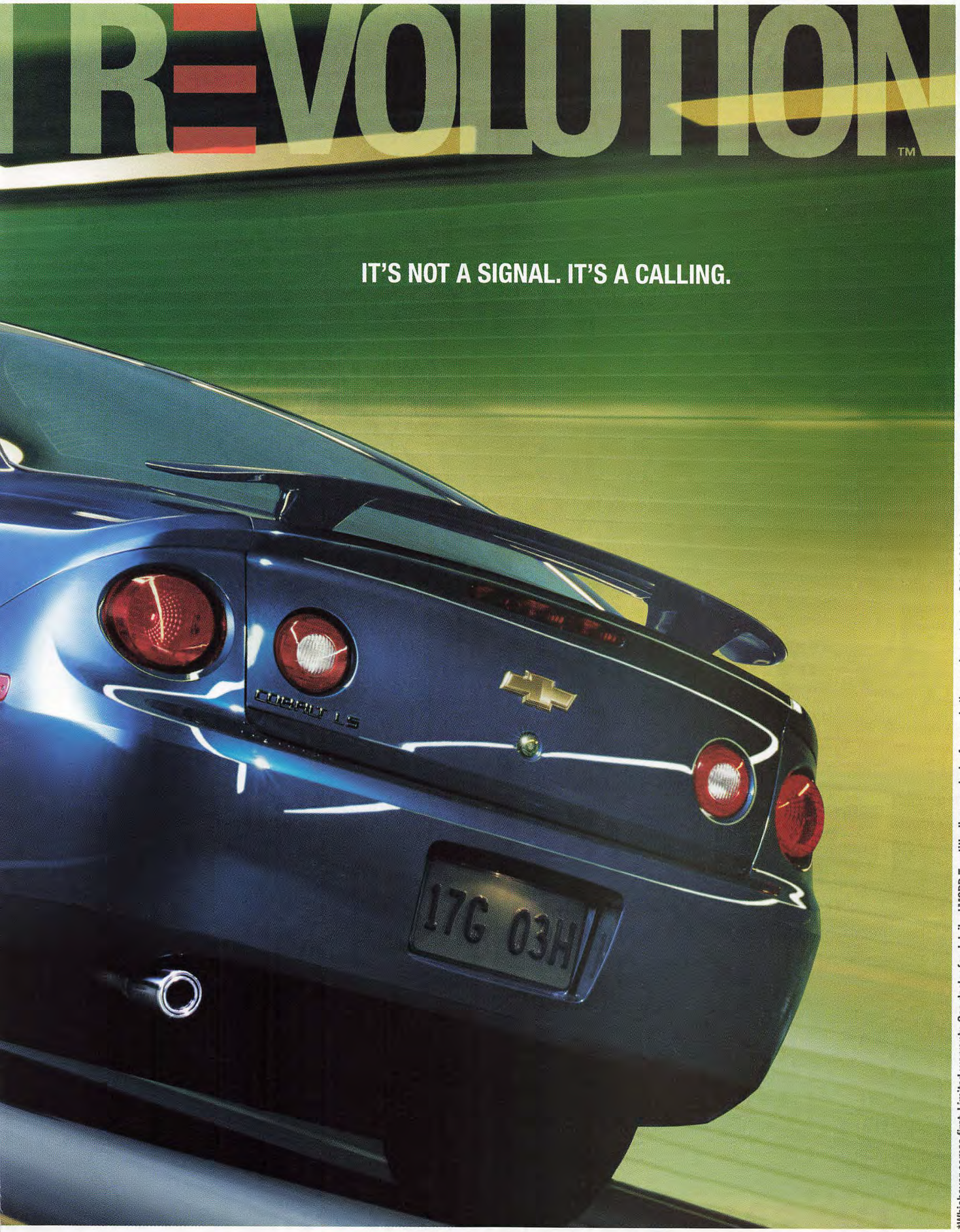
MÖTLEY CRÜE: PEROU; ROSE: LFI

© 2005 R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.



cobalt

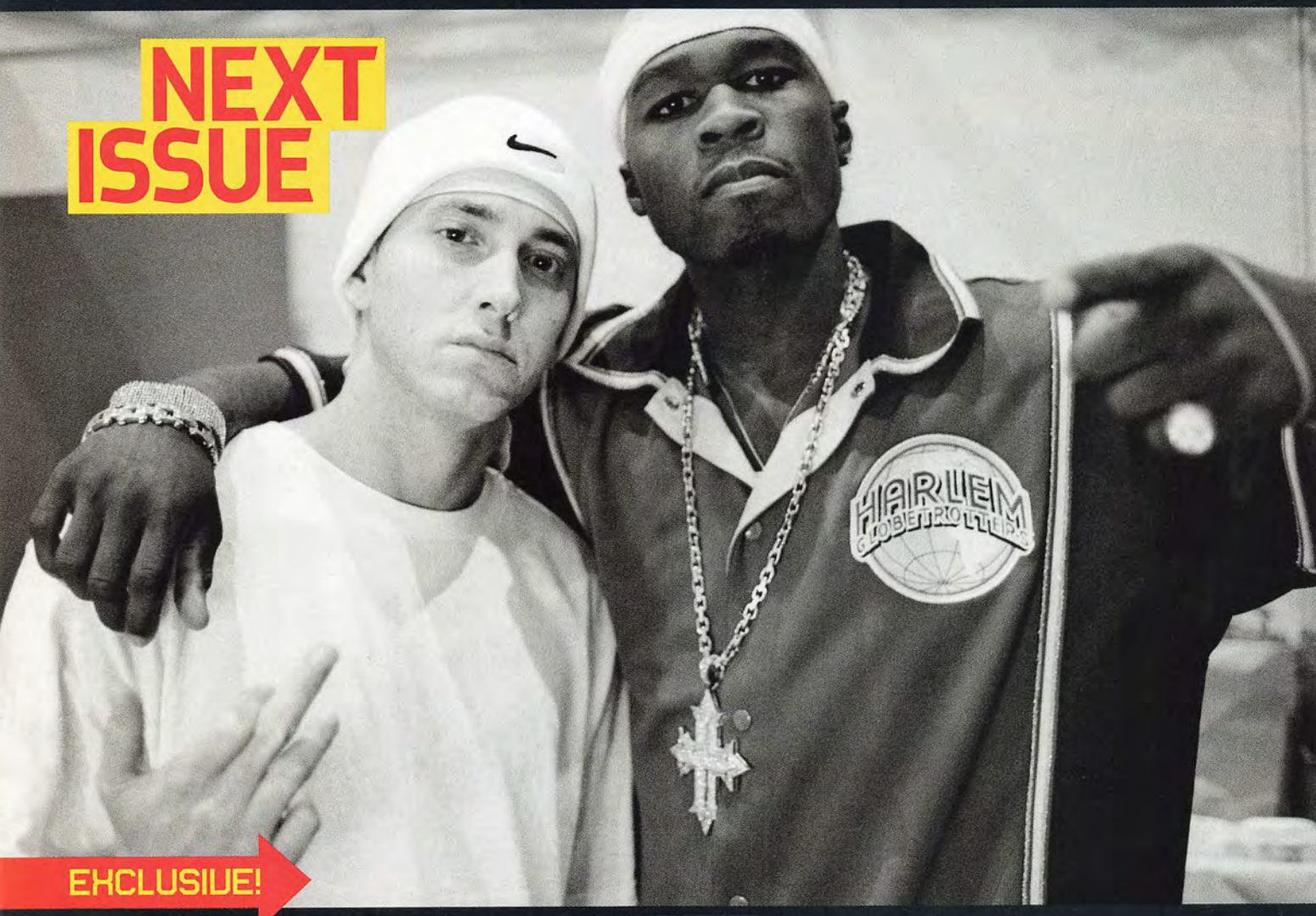
WHEN YOU HAVE COBALT'S FREE-BREATHING 2.2 LITER ECOTEC® ENGINE, SPEED-SENSITIVE STEERING, OVERDRIVE, EVERYTHING IS A GO. CHEVY™ COBALT,™ WITH A 5-YEAR/60,000-MILE POWERTRAIN WARRANTY.*



FRONT AND REAR STABILIZER BARS AND AVAILABLE FOUR-SPEED AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION WITH
T'S THE NEW COMMOTION IN THE CHEVY FAMILY. STARTING AT $14,190† (AS SHOWN $17,080†).

*Whichever comes first. Limited warranty. See dealer for details. †MSRP. Tax, title, license, dealer fees and other equipment extra. ©2005 GM Corp. Buckle up, America!

NEXT ISSUE



EXCLUSIVE!

EMINEM + 50 CENT

THUGS 4 LIFE...
BEST FRIENDS 4 EVER!

PLUS
A HANDY GUIDE TO
ROCK & ROLL
SEX SCANDALS

ON SALE TUESDAY, APRIL 19

ROSS HALFIN/IDOLS

VIRGIN COLLEGE MEGA TOUR

FEATURING

CAKE

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS

GOMEZ and ROBBERS ON HIGH STREET

PRESENTED BY

dentyne.com

TBD Austin, TX/ University of Texas
4/6 New Orleans, LA/ Tulane University
4/12 Atlanta, GA/ Emory University
4/14 Chicago, IL/ Loyola University
4/16 Bethlehem, PA/ Lehigh University
4/17 Potsdam, NY/ SUNY Potsdam
4/21 Nashville, TN/ Vanderbilt University

4/25 Denver, CO/ Denver University
4/28 Minneapolis, MN/ University of Minnesota
4/29 Grinnell, IA/ Grinnell College
5/1 Champaign, IL/ University of Illinois
TBD San Jose, CA/ San Jose State University
TBD Orange County, CA
TBD Los Angeles, CA/ UCLA

* For additional dates check virgincollegemegatour.com
* All dates subject to change.

PONTIAC

Authentic

Virgin MEGASTORE

VIRGINMEGA.COM

VIRGINCOLLEGEMEGATOUR.COM

BURNER

BRITNEY GETS HEALED ★ BEACH GEEZERS ★ LIL JON'S PORN

SLAMMER TIME

THE INC. CEO **IRV GOTTI** HAS BEEN LAUNDERING MONEY, AND HIS EXTENDED FAMILY HAS BEEN DEALING DRUGS AND MURDERING PEOPLE. THAT'S WHAT FEDERAL INVESTIGATORS SAY, AND THEY ARE DETERMINED TO PUT THE SELF-STYLED GANGSTER IN JAIL

RAP KINGPIN IRV Gotti fashioned himself after a ruthless Mafia don banished to life in prison. Maybe that wasn't such a good idea after all.

The hip-hop executive—who once referred to his company, The Inc. (formerly Murder Inc.), as the "World's Most Dangerous Record Label"—is facing federal money-laundering charges. If convicted, Gotti could serve 20 years in prison.

At a January press conference at the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District, in downtown Brooklyn, senior officials from the FBI, ATF and IRS, alongside New York Police Department commissioner Raymond Kelly, trumpeted the unprecedented scope of the two-year investigation, in which they allege that Gotti, 34 (real name Irving Lorenzo), and his brother Christopher Lorenzo, 33, laundered more than $1 million in drug money through their record company. Law-enforcement officials charge that the label was a front for the notorious Queens drug lord Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff, 45, and his cartel, known as the Supreme Team, one of the "nation's most murderous drug crews."

"They don't call it 'gangster rap' for nothing," sneered FBI agent Fred Snellings. "The thug image is not accidental." Kelly stressed that the case was "not an indictment of rap music. If you're involved with money laundering or drug dealing or committing murder, we're coming after you ... that's our business."

The sprawling 37-page indictment details a wide variety of criminal activity, including racketeering, drug trafficking, illegal use of firearms, money laundering and, most ominously for McGriff, multiple murders, including the August 20, 2001, homicides of Karon Clarret and Dwayne Thomas in Owings Mills, Maryland, and the July 16, 2001, homicide of Eric Smith—a rapper known as E-Money Bags—in New York City.

McGriff and several other co-defendants face the death penalty if convicted of the most serious charges.

The downfall of Gotti, a onetime party DJ, may prove to be the ultimate story of hip-hop hubris. Gotti founded Murder Inc. in 1997, backed by an estimated $3 million investment from Universal's Island Def Jam division, and quickly established the label as a potent commercial force in urban music. As CEO and producer, the cherubic Gotti masterminded hit CDs from Ja Rule and Ashanti and became a celebrity in his own right, an East Coast version of notorious Death Row CEO Suge Knight.

"THEY DON'T CALL IT 'GANGSTER RAP' FOR NOTHING."

Infatuated with American gangster mythology, Gotti took his moniker from the "Teflon Don," Mafia kingpin John Gotti, and decorated his Murder Inc. suites in a fantasy gangster motif.

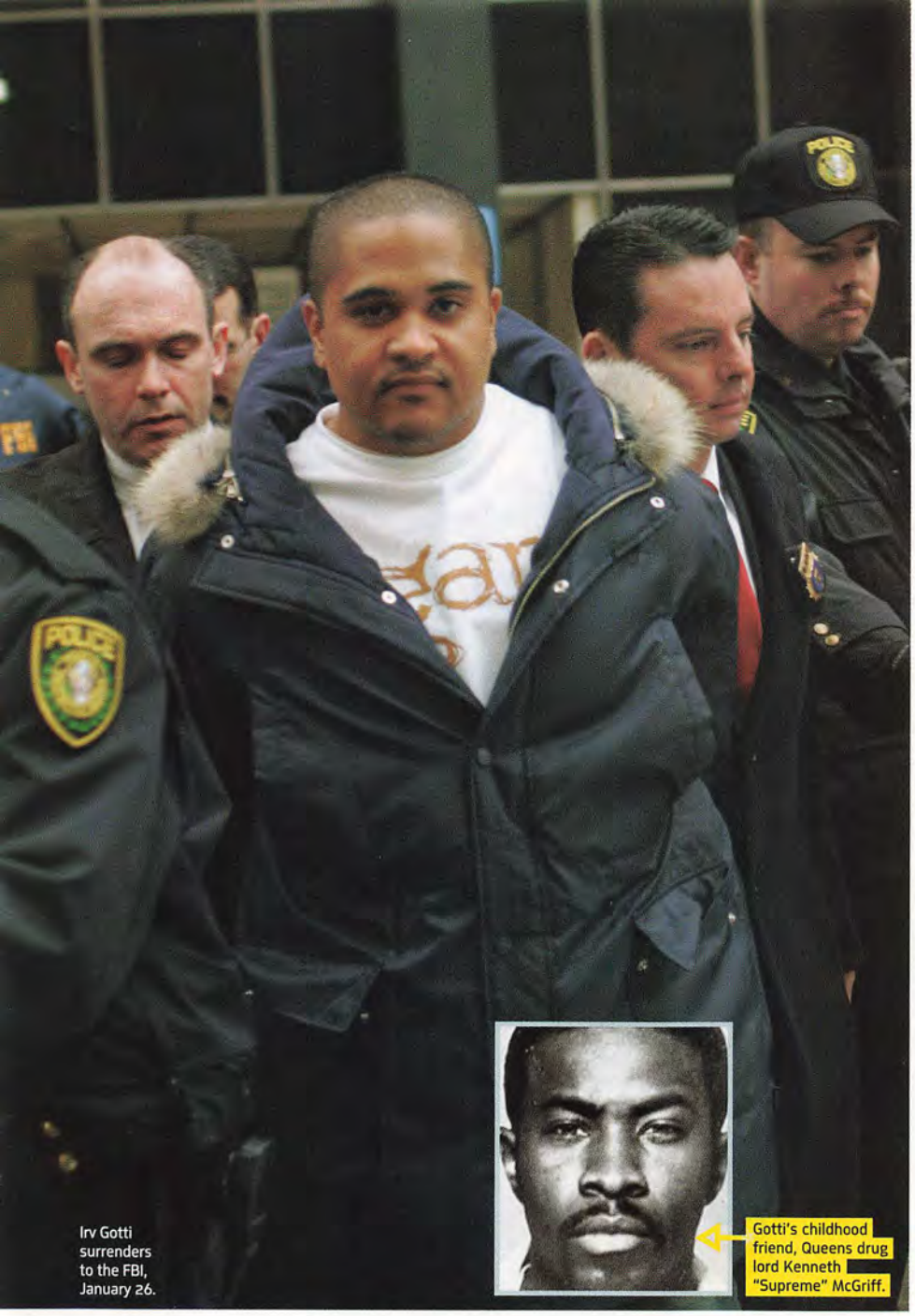
Gotti with The Inc. artists Ashanti, Charli Baltimore and Ja Rule, 2002.

Portraits of the Murder Inc. "family" in black topcoats and snap-brim fedoras hung on blood-red walls. A federal raid on the label offices in 2003, however, prompted a chastened Gotti to remove the word *Murder* from the company's name. Since then the label has floundered, with both Ja Rule and Ashanti suffering declining sales.

"No way have I done anything wrong, except make great music that the people seem to love, and that's all that I'm guilty of," said Gotti in a statement.

At the heart of the government's case against Gotti is his 20-plus-year relationship with Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff. "I grew up poor from the streets, so I have friends," said Gotti of fellow Hollis, Queens, native McGriff, who is currently serving a 37-month sentence for gun possession. Upon McGriff's 1995 release

MATTHIAS CLAMER/CORBIS OUTLINE



Irv Gotti surrenders to the FBI, January 26.

Gotti's childhood friend, Queens drug lord Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff.

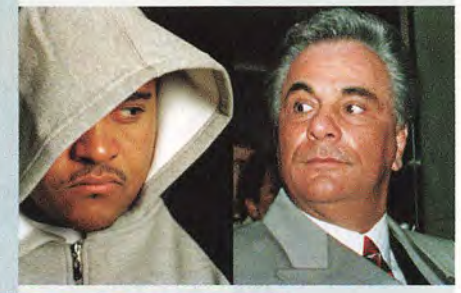
from federal prison, after serving eight years for running a "continuing criminal enterprise," Gotti immediately brought him into the Murder Inc. family, listing him as a screenwriter and producer on the straight-to-DVD film *Crime Partners*, for which the crack kingpin—a 42-year-old felon with no known film credits or experience—was paid a fee of $500,000. Gotti's best-selling rap star, Ja Rule, boasted of the label's connection to McGriff on a 1997 compilation CD, *Survival of the Illest*, rhyming: "Funds unlimited/Backed by my 'Preme Team crime representatives."

Prosecutors allege that Gotti took in cash directly from the Supreme Team's drug operations, deposited it into his legitimate recording ventures and then issued McGriff both personal and corporate checks, in effect helping to conceal more than $1 million in illicit narcotics profits.

One veteran federal prosecutor not involved in the case painted a bleak forecast for the Gottis, noting that, given the number of federal agencies and taxpayer dollars invested in the case, the brothers were unlikely to follow in the footsteps of other hip-hop figures such as Snoop Dogg and P. Diddy, whose high-profile criminal prosecutions resulted in acquittals at trial.

"It's sad about Irv Gotti's situation," said 50 Cent, who has maintained a long-running feud with Ja Rule and Murder Inc. "He allowed his blessings to turn into something negative. After establishing himself in the music business, he tried to become something he never had the heart to be in his neighborhood. That's where 'Gotti' came from. He was DJ Irv ahead of that. Anybody that's in the street is trying to get out." *DOUGLAS CENTURY*

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: ART RAMONE/ZUMANEWS.COM; DAVID TITLOW/CAMERA PRESS/RETNA LTD.; REUTERS/CORBIS



GROWING UP GOTTI

TALE OF THE TAPE: HOW DOES IRV STACK UP AGAINST "DAPPER" JOHN GOTTI?

	IRV	JOHN
CLAIM TO FAME	Head of The Inc., whose family includes DMX, Ja Rule and Ashanti.	Former capo of the Gambino crime family, which controlled the Teamsters Union.
GOING DOWN	Indicted on charges of laundering money for a convicted drug dealer.	Convicted of racketeering and sentenced to life in prison, where he died in 2002.
EARLY START	Starting mixing demos when he was 12.	Thrown in jail for fighting, stealing cars and gun possession by 24.
BAD FRIENDS	Convicted felon Kenneth McGriff, said to be behind at least six drug-related murders.	Gotti's underboss Sammy "The Bull" Gravano ratted out his boss.
STOMPING GROUND	Grew up in Hollis, Queens.	Grew up in the South Bronx, moved to Ozone Park, Queens.
HOME BASE	Jet-sets between New York, L.A. and Miami.	Then: Ravenite Social Club in Little Italy. Now: St. John's cemetery, Queens.
DRESS CODE	Formal: ivory suits, fedora hats. Casual: bulky parkas, construction boots.	Formal: Brioni suits, monogrammed Gucci socks. Casual: prison smock.
FAMILY TIES	Brother Christopher Lorenzo is also on trial for laundering charges.	Son John Gotti Jr. is awaiting trial on various charges. Brother Gene is serving 50 years for heroin trafficking.
WHEELS	Big black Mercedes.	Big black Lincoln.
TOUGH TALK	Told Island Def Jam CEO Lyor Cohen, "My plan is to become you, and then to destroy you."	Once chastised an underling: "Follow orders or I'll blow up your house." *JOHANNA PIAZZA*

HELP THE AGED

Trend alert: GEEZERS go to the beach with their much-younger ladyfriends.

55-year-old BILLY JOEL'S wife, Kate Lee, 23, takes the sun-dazed singer for a walk.

60-year-old ROD STEWART'S galpal Penny Lancaster, 33, spoon-feeds the pop star ice cream.

69-year-old LUCIANO PAVAROTTI relaxes while wife Nicoletta Mantovani, 34, entertains their daughter.

NEWS ROUNDUP

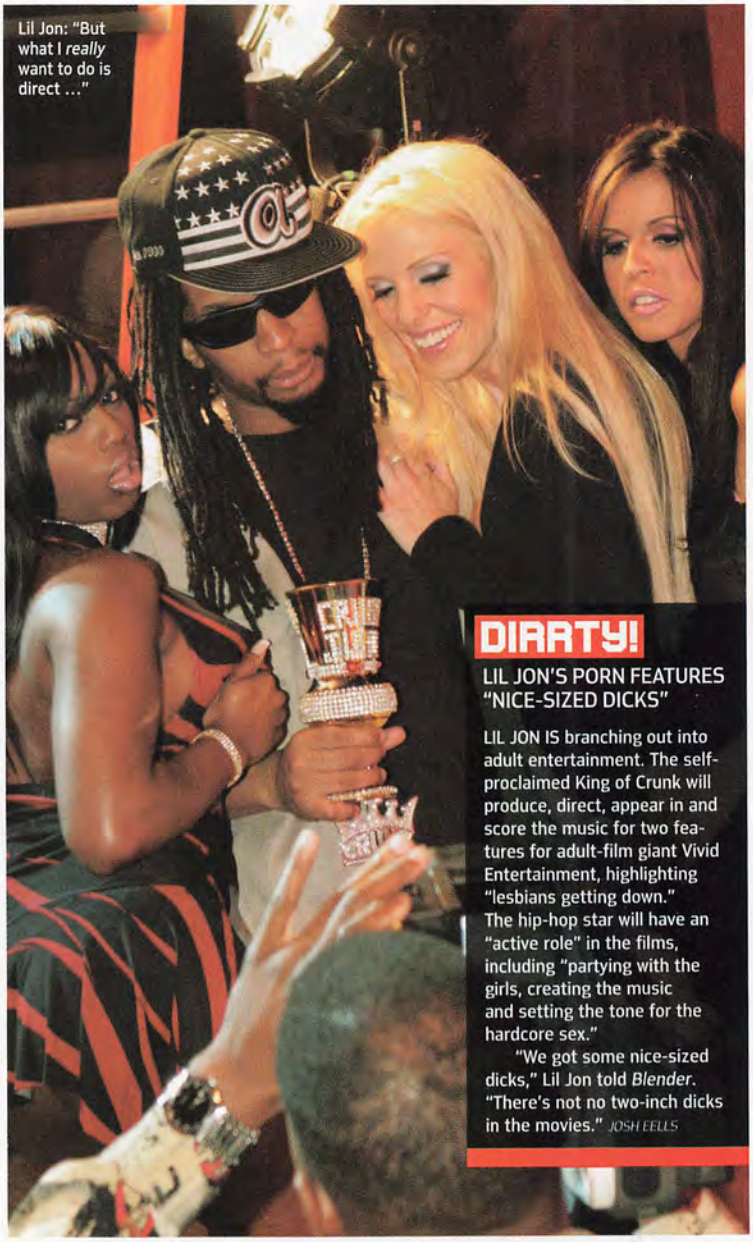
TINA TURNER recently followed JANET JACKSON by accidentally popping out of her dress during a live performance on Canadian television. The veteran singer laughed before speedily reinserting herself.

BRITNEY SPEARS reportedly wants to end her feud with CHRISTINA AGUILERA. According to a source, Spears recently sent Aguilera a friendly letter and claimed her old rival had been looking "pretty and rested."

American Idol host SIMON COWELL has admitted he was initially attracted to PAULA ABDUL but did not make any moves because he "realized I'd have to wake up next to her."

WORD!

"I hate the fact I have such a bad rap from the gay community."
EMINEM



Lil Jon: "But what I *really* want to do is direct ..."

DIRRTY!

LIL JON'S PORN FEATURES "NICE-SIZED DICKS"

LIL JON IS branching out into adult entertainment. The self-proclaimed King of Crunk will produce, direct, appear in and score the music for two features for adult-film giant Vivid Entertainment, highlighting "lesbians getting down." The hip-hop star will have an "active role" in the films, including "partying with the girls, creating the music and setting the tone for the hardcore sex."

"We got some nice-sized dicks," Lil Jon told *Blender*. "There's not no two-inch dicks in the movies." JOSH EELLS

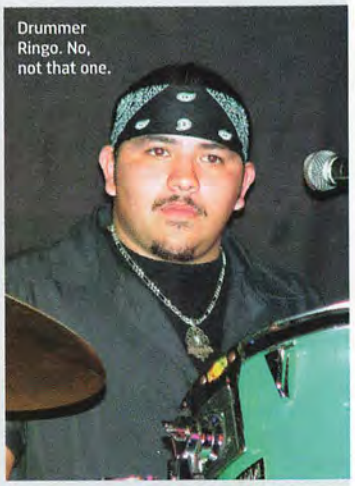
YIKES!

LOS LONELY DRUMMER A STONED RAPIST?

POLICE INVADED THE San Angelo, Texas, home of Ringo Garza, the 23-year-old Los Lonely Boys drummer, and his wife Lenora, 24, after two women claimed they had been drugged and raped at the couple's home.

After the search, the Garzas were charged with possession of marijuana. Mr. Garza pleaded no contest to a similar misdemeanor drug charge in 2003. "He is not guilty of anything and we don't expect him to be charged [for sexual assault]," said his lawyer, Neal Davis.

The "Texican" rock trio garnered four Grammy nominations in 2004. NOELLE HANCOCK



Drummer Ringo. No, not that one.

JOEL: REFLEX NEWS; STEWART: ELIOT PRESS/BAUER-GRIFFIN.COM; PAVAROTTI: BAUER-GRIFFIN.COM; LIL JON: COURTESY OF VIVID; GARZA: GAIL/WENN/NEWSCOM; EMINEM: WIREIMAGE.COM/ILLUSTRATION BY GARY FRENCH

Clothing with a British Accent.

Photo: Jock McDonald

Colin Smith
Lead Singer: Mr. North
www.mrnorthmusic.com

it's all inside.™
JCPenney
stores | catalog | .com

nick(it)
New York. London. Mars.

Available at JCPenney stores nationwide.
For fun go to www.nickit.us
For shopping fun go to jcpenney.com

Brooke Valentine

PRETTY, SURE, BUT THIS 19-YEAR-OLD SINGER IS A SCRAPPY BRUISER

BY NICK DUERDEN
PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID FERRUA

BROOKE VALENTINE IS sprawled across her Manhattan hotel bed in a short skirt and tight vest. At only 19 years old, she makes it all look easy. "Oh, no," she contradicts sternly. "I've fought to get where I am today."

It all started a decade ago in her native Houston, where she showed off her formidable voice in front of church-goers every Sunday morning. Supported by her hardworking single mom, Valentine joined the girl group Best Kept Secret, then fled to L.A. for solo glory.

"I'VE NEVER KILLED ANYONE, BUT I'VE FELT THE EMOTION."

Her debut, *Chain Letter*, is a smart collection of Beyoncé-like R&B grooves and features Outkast's Big Boi and the late ODB. It's assertive stuff. The Lil Jon–produced "Girlfight"—the fiercest slice of Crunk&B since Ciara's "Goodies"—encourages aggression where necessary, while "I Want You Dead" is full of murderous intention for an ex-boyfriend. "I've never killed anyone, but I've felt the emotion," she says. "I think it's positive to recognize anger, don't you?"

At school she was a tomboy, forever getting into fights. "If people wanted to fight me—because of my hair or because my skin was too dark—then I fought them," she says. "Everyone always says I don't look like a fighter. Should I have Vaseline all over my face? That's stupid. I fight, and I stand up for myself."

It's an attitude, she says, that will help her survive the music industry. "I'm afraid of nobody, and I always get the last word. Absolutely, every time. Even with you." She makes a fist. "Trust me."

OUT NOW *CHAIN LETTER* VIRGIN

ALL ABOUT ME!

FAVORITE SONG
"Lovers Rock" by Sade

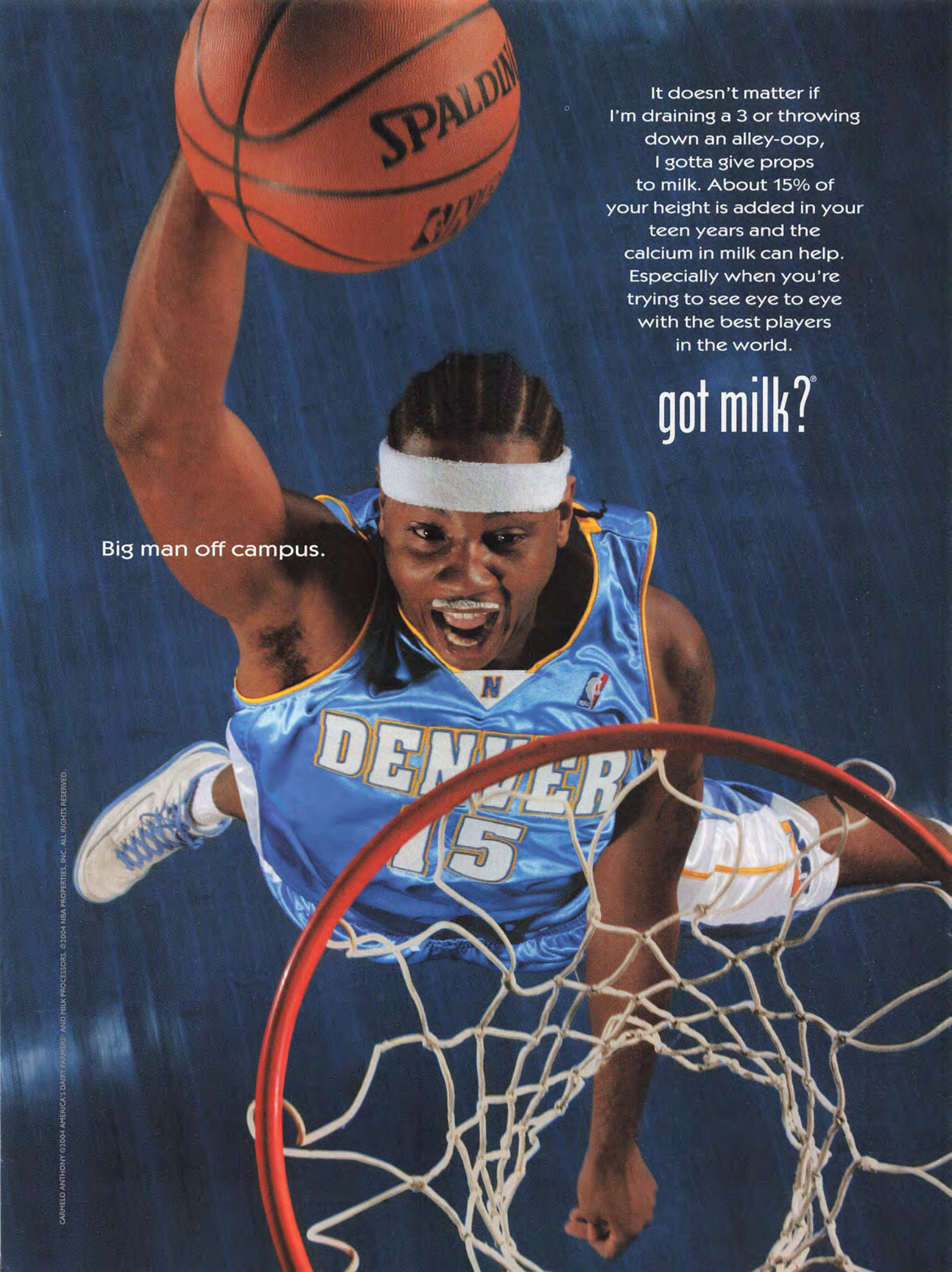
MOST DIVA-LIKE DEMAND
"I have to have my two shih tzus, Jersey and Dino, with me at all times!"

WON'T TOUR WITHOUT
My iPod

SET DESIGN BY BRETT DOUGLAS FOR KIM MILES; STYLING BY LISA VON WEISE AT KATY BARKER; MAKEUP BY MONIFA MORTIS/THE MONTGOMERY GROUP; HAIR BY CARLA GENTRY FOR MARGARETMALDONADO.COM

SILVER HOOPS BY SPANGLE DESIGN TOP BY HIDY NG BRA BY FELINA SHORTS BY J-LO

 "Three, six, nine/Damn, she fine/Hopin' she can sock it to me one mo' time."


SPALDING
It doesn't matter if I'm draining a 3 or throwing down an alley-oop, I gotta give props to milk. About 15% of your height is added in your teen years and the calcium in milk can help. Especially when you're trying to see eye to eye with the best players in the world.
got milk?®
Big man off campus.
DENVER
15
CARMELO ANTHONY ©2004 AMERICA'S DAIRY FARMERS AND MILK PROCESSORS. ©2004 NBA PROPERTIES, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

RALPH!

How did 500 fans of THE CHARLATANS U.K. contract "Winter Vomiting Disease"? Read on …

Last May, a fan of the Charlatans U.K. suffering from food poisoning vomits at the band's gig at the Music Hall in Aberdeen, Scotland.

During the concert, a puke-borne virus spreads throughout the crowd via the air-conditioning system. Mass upchucking ensues.

In January it is revealed that 500 concertgoers contracted "Winter Vomiting Disease," spread when someone vomits and virus-soaked aerosols enter the air. *GABE SORIA*

NEWS ROUNDUP

U2 guitarist the EDGE has obtained a restraining order against reporters at the Irish newspaper the *Sunday World*, which had printed stories about a family member's illness.

Yusuf Islam, formerly known as singer CAT STEVENS, has visited the tsunami-hit Indonesian province of Aceh to survey the devastation. Last year the singer was turned away from the United States for alleged connections to Islamic fundamentalism.

STING cut short a ski vacation after a fan used a camera phone to snap the singer leaving a steam room in his bathrobe. An eyewitness claimed the singer "went completely mad."

WORD!

"It's a hip, slick, happening, Paris-Hilton-getting-fucked-up the-arse kind of town."

OZZY OSBOURNE ON LOS ANGELES

D'Angelo mugshot, January 9, 2005.

ODB mugshot, 2002.

Dead Ringer

R&B singer and late rapper separated at birth?

In his five-year absence from the spotlight, R&B singer D'Angelo, 31, has become an eerie doppelganger for the late ODB. Evidence comes in the form of a puffy-faced mugshot taken after his arrest for drunk driving and possession of cocaine and marijuana in January.

D'Angelo, in shape, naked, 2000.

This is the second arrest for D'Angelo (real name Michael Eugene Archer) since his star-making 2000 video, "Untitled (How Does It Feel)." Three years ago, the singer was charged with assault after he spit on a woman at a Richmond, Virginia, gas station. *LAUREN HARRIS*

OH NO HE *DIDN'T*!

THE GAME WANTED TO "STAY TOGETHER"; SHE DIDN'T.

Blender has uncovered an image that captures the Game in a particularly un-gangsta moment—on the dating show *Change of Heart*. The Compton MC (born Jayceon Taylor) says the episode was taped when he was in high school. "I was an 18-year-old looking to get money, and I thought, 'This is a way I can make an easy $1,000!'" *NOEL BODDIE*

The Game, not in sync with his former baby girl.

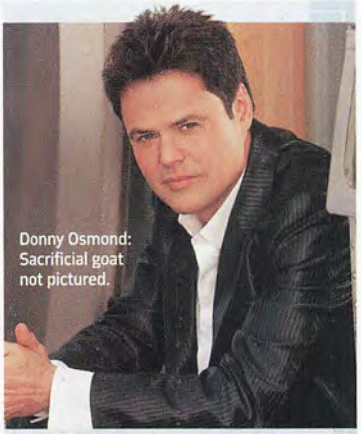
CARTOON: JOHN JAY; OSBOURNE: JEFFREY MAYER/WIREIMAGE.COM

We care about you. Ride safely, respectfully and within the limits of the law and your abilities. Always wear an approved helmet, proper eyewear and protective clothing, and insist your passenger does too. Never ride while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Know your Harley® motorcycle and read and understand your owner's manual from cover to cover. ©2004 H-D.

WE'RE ALL CREATED EQUAL. BUT AFTER THAT, IT'S UP TO YOU.

Every single Harley-Davidson® motorcycle is designed to set you apart from the masses. But for the chosen few who want to take the idea yet a step further, meet the V-Rod.® The sculpted aluminum bodywork is pure art. And the high-revving Revolution® V-Twin engine instantly puts a little distance between you and the other six billion people on the planet. 1-800-588-2743 for a dealer or visit www.harley-davidson.com. **IT'S TIME TO RIDE.**

MOTOR HARLEY-DAVIDSON CYCLES®


Donny Osmond: Sacrificial goat not pictured.

DO YOU ROCK?

DONNY OSMOND

DOES THE FORMER TEEN IDOL AND WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS MORMON INDEED ... *ROCK*?

Best rumor about yourself?
That Boy George and I were dating.

Ever trash a hotel room?
When I was 14, I clogged the toilet, turned the beds upside-down and put shaving cream everywhere. My dad found out and it wasn't pretty.

Ever had a gambling fixation?
No, but the only time I gambled I put a quarter in the slot machine and won three hundred bucks.

Biggest celeb in your cellphone?
Tom Hanks.

Ever wrecked a car?
I flipped my car while driving in the Long Beach Grand Prix.

Worst place you've ever been sick?
In Vegas I was so sick that I had to walk offstage and puke.

Stupidest thing you've ever eaten?
A cricket omelet.

Most expensive item of clothing?
After I did *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, they wouldn't let me keep the coat so I stole it. It's probably worth $5,000.

Craziest rider clause?
Arcade versions of Pac-Man and Centipede.

Most decadent thing you've ever done?
When they were going to stop the Concorde, I went to London for the day and came back. *DAVE HILL*

VERDICT

FLIPPING RACE CARS? STEALING COATS? DONNY OSMOND ROCKS HARDER THAN MOST *NON*-MORMONS!

→ DONNY OSMOND'S NEW ALBUM, *WHAT I MEANT TO SAY* (DECCA), IS OUT NOW.

NEWS ROUNDUP

An online petition is asking METALLICA to split from longtime producer Bob Rock. The plea claims: "We are not criticizing Bob Rock on his technical skills ... We just feel that his contributions to help craft a Metallica song are quite wrong and have been getting worse as time goes on."

A group of fans of American Idol runner-up CLAY AIKEN have started behaving like a cult, even holding 24-hour group prayer sessions on the last night of every month to wish their hero well for the weeks ahead.

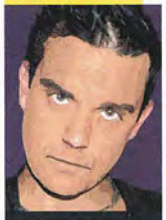
POSER!

PARIS HILTON ROTATES FOR THE CAMERA

MULTITASKING cultural icon Paris Hilton is featured in a short film wearing a green bra and panties and rotating on a pedestal.

Screenshots of the obscure shoot circulated recently on the Internet. Directed by actor/musician/director Vincent Gallo, the footage appeared in his music video for "Honey Bunny," the first single off his 2001 CD, *When*. Another track on the Paris-obsessed album is titled "I Wrote This Song for the Girl Paris Hilton."

WORD!

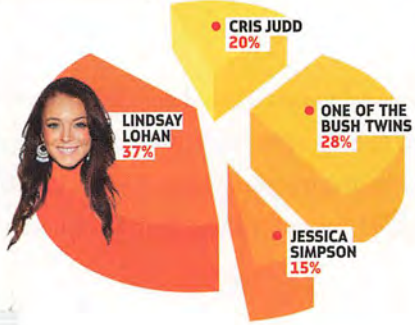


"I've only got one left to have had all of the Spice Girls."
ROBBIE WILLIAMS

BLENDER'S BURNING QUESTION

WHO SHOULD KEVIN FEDERLINE MARRY NEXT?

SURVEY SAYS



READER WISDOM

"CRIS JUDD! THEY CAN DANCE THEIR BROKE ASSES TO THE BANK TOGETHER."
MATT GRIFFIN, CORDOVA, TX

Log on to Blender.com for June's "BURNING QUESTION."

One deserving reader will have his or her comment published in the next issue and win a Motorola V265 cellphone!

HILTON: JON KOPALOFF/FILMMAGIC.COM; FEDERLINE: MICHAEL CAULFIELD/WIREIMAGE.COM; LOHAN: THEO WARGO/WIREIMAGE.COM; WILLIAMS: ALBERT L. ORTEGA/WIREIMAGE.COM/ILLUSTRATION BY GARY FRENCH

©2005 Anheuser-Busch, Inc. B E Flavored Beer, St. Louis, MO

YOU CAN GO HOME EARLY WHEN YOU'RE MARRIED.

GO LONGER.

RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS

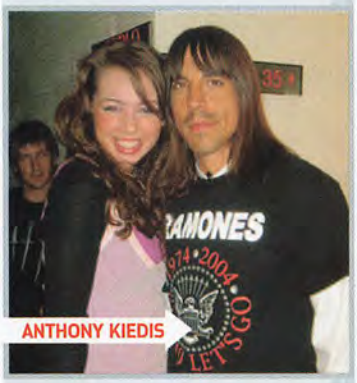
budextra.com

The beer with caffeine, ginseng, guarana and a crisp refreshing taste that will unshackle the ball and chain from your evening. So go ahead, linger.

POP STAR MUST HAVE

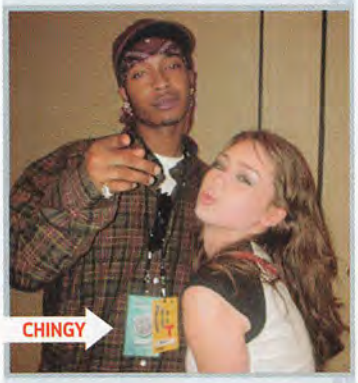
SKYE SWEETNAM!

THE TEEN-POP TUFF IS CLEANER THAN A CHIHUAHUA AND JUST AS CUTE.



ANTHONY KIEDIS

FEFE DOBSON



CHINGY

ASHLEE SIMPSON

NEWS ROUNDUP

RINGO STARR is becoming a cartoon superhero in a new series to hit screens next year. Spider-Man creator Stan Lee says he hit upon the idea because "Ringo is beloved worldwide for his singular wit and commitment to people."

The YEAH YEAH YEAHS have decided to scrap all the songs written for their second album because they sounded too familiar. "It's in our best interests to try and explore other directions," says singer Karen O.

Famed college dropout KANYE WEST is starting a foundation to help stop rising high school dropout rates.

WORD!

"Show business is a fake business filled with people who are fake."
CHRISTINA AGUILERA

The Foo Fighters: They're rocking on the inside.

IN THE STUDIO

"F#%&ing Didgeridoos!"

That's what the Foo Fighters have in store on their new double album

"IT'S OUR FIFTH album and our tenth year together—we had to make an event of it." That, says lead singer Dave Grohl, is what inspired L.A.'s Foo Fighters to make a sprawling double CD, one disc acoustic and one electric—and to record it at a studio they built themselves.

"We bought an 8,000-sq.-ft. warehouse and spent six months turning it into the Abbey Road of the San Fernando Valley," Grohl says proudly. "We had a contractor do the drywall and framing, but everything else was us and our friends."

Not that the Foos have been working too hard. "We play a lot of fucking ping-pong," Grohl laughs. "We're official, too: regulation serves, regulation scoring. It's on.

"We also drink a lot of this Icelandic schnapps called Brennivin. It's, like, euphoric. It makes you crazy—like a happy Viking."

Between drunken ping-pong battles, they've managed to record a few songs. The livelier "rock" record is almost finished, and Grohl's excited. "It's like sitting your white cheeks on top of a barbecue grill," he grins. "It's the most ass-kicking thing we've ever done."

As for the acoustic record, they haven't started it yet, but "we're gonna go balls-out," Grohl promises. "We're gonna have accordions. We're gonna have fucking didgeridoos!"

And how it would feel, wonders *Blender*, to listen to the new album while drinking his Scandinavian liqueur? "Oh man!" he marvels. "That'd be like having two chicks at once!" JOSH EELLS

ALL ABOUT OUR ALBUM

ARTIST
Foo Fighters

STUDIO
Studio 606, Los Angeles

PRODUCED BY
Nick Raskulinecz and Foo Fighters

LAST RECORD
One by One, 2002

NEW RECORD
So far untitled, due this summer

ALSO IN THE STUDIO

THE ROOTS are recording *Game Theory*, the follow-up to last year's *The Tipping Point*, at Philadelphia's The Studio.

THE DAVE MATTHEWS BAND are in their Charlottesville studio, recording the follow-up to 2002's *Busted Stuff*.

Seminal New Wave band **GANG OF FOUR** are in London working on their first new album in a decade.

THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS are tucked away in Vancouver working on the follow-up to 2003's *Electric Version*.

FOO FIGHTERS: ZACH CORDNER; SWEETNAM: COURTESY OF SKYESWEETNAM.COM (3); DOBSON: THEO WARGO/WIREIMAGE.COM; AGUILERA: LESTER COHEN/WIREIMAGE.COM; ILLUSTRATION BY GARY FRENCH

Do the math.

How much will it cost to fill up your player?

iTunes®

+

10,000 songs to fill an iPod®

= $10,000

napster™ TO GO

+

Your choice of a million songs to fill your compatible MP3 player*

= $15 Per Month

Introducing *Napster To Go*™. Now you can fill and refill your compatible MP3 player with your choice of over one million songs for only $14.95 per month.
All the music you want. Any way you want it.

Try *Napster To Go* for free at Napster.com

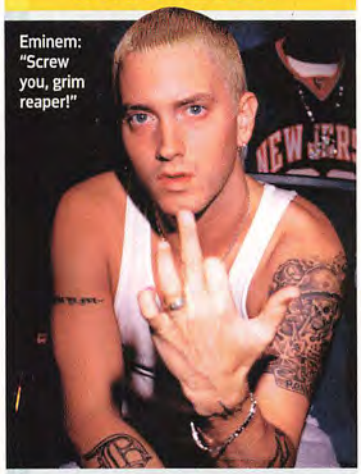
napster™

The breakthrough technology behind *Napster To Go* works with great players from iriver, Dell, Creative, Samsung, Gateway and others.

***It is necessary to maintain a subscription in order to continue access to songs downloaded from *Napster To Go*.**

© 2003-2005 Napster, LLC. Napster, *Napster To Go* and the Kitty Head Design are trademarks of Napster. Other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

WHEN WILL YOUR FAVORITE POP STAR CROAK?



Eminem: "Screw you, grim reaper!"

#17 EMINEM

CURRENT AGE	**32**
DEATH CALCULATOR STARTS AT AGE	**79**
CATEGORY	**YEARS ADDED/SUBTRACTED**
White male	-2
Abandoned in infancy by dad, sued later by mother for defamation	-6
Erratic education: 3 weeks per school (-3), flunked 3 times (-2), dropped out (-2)	-7
Marries Kim (+5), divorces Kim (-2), ugly child custody battle (-2)	+1
Drug abuse (-9), alcohol abuse (-4)	-13
Self-starts highly imaginative performance career	+2
Neurobic: extreme creativity in composition and performance	+4
Suicide attempts a family tradition: his, his wife's, and his uncle's (disposition to mental illness)	-6
Success (+3) leads to stressful media overexposure (-1)	+2
Does not play well with others (everpresent threat of violence)	-3
Hates women (-1), hates gays (-1), hates mom (-1), hates ex-wife (-2)	-5
Angry compositions reflect legendary hatred (cathartic release, expression)	+4
Works out to keep toned form	+4
ESTIMATED LIFE EXPECTANCY	**54**
PROJECTED YEAR OF DEATH	**2027**

GERONTOLOGIST DR. DEMKO SAYS: Eminem's family life plays like his music, generating enough anger to fuel a blazing career. Learning to forgive will change the odds.

NEWS ROUNDUP

A remixed version of SNOOP DOGG's "Drop It Like It's Hot" has leaked out in which guest rapper JAY-Z takes a swipe at former tourmate R. KELLY, rapping: "It's Jizz-ay, homey, you got plizz-ayed/Take it like a man, the flow ran you off the stizz-age."

RAY CHARLES'S son Ray Charles Robinson has been arrested for alleged drug possession and being under the influence of cocaine. Police arrested the 45-year-old at the Dunes Wilshire motel in Los Angeles after receiving an anonymous tip.

Former Spice Girl EMMA BUNTON admitted to HOWARD STERN that she was once given a vibrator by ex-bandmate Mel B. as a present.

WORD!

"I don't really care about sex."
PARIS HILTON

QUACH!

BRITNEY GOES TO A STRIP-MALL HEALER

BRITNEY SPEARS HAD her chakras assessed on a recent visit to the shopping-mall office of energy healer Nicky Peevski. The $70/hour Malibu healer worked on the pop star to "ease blockages in her inner spirit" and was shocked by Spears's radiating power. "My fingers froze and were paralyzed for hours after she left," he said. "Her energy was positive, happy and open, like a freeway."

WEIRD BAND ALERT

CLOBBER

PUNK-ROCK PUPPET TRIO SING ABOUT BLOW JOBS AND BEER

Clobber: "We are not puppets!" Humans: "Yes you are!"

A PUPPET TRIO?
Yes. Three wooden marionettes are manipulated by the hands (and one foot) of Atlanta puppet-maker Jason Hines, 30. He's also their manager. Manager? "It's a hobby I've taken way too far," he admits.

WHAT ARE CLOBBER'S SONGS LIKE?
Mohawk-sporting singer/guitarist Daniel Rhodearmor, bassist Mitchell McGurt and drummer Ed play punk rock songs with titles like "Blowjob and a Beer" and "I Love Punk Rock." And they curse like truckers.

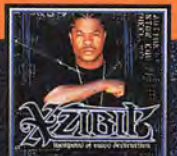
THEY USE SWEAR WORDS?
Yes. Puppetry is not, apparently, an exact science. And since the puppeteer is balancing on one foot (the other is working the drummer), it's impossible, Hines says, to do it without using the F-word, continually, over the course of a show. *LAUREN HARRIS*

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: RON WOLFSON/WIREIMAGE.COM; AC/X17 AGENCY.COM; COURTESY OF CLOBBER; WIREIMAGE.COM/ILLUSTRATION BY GARY FRENCH

rucingular.com

Off the chain or off the stage? You decide.

HIP HOP SupaStar
hosted by Xzibit



Text your vote for the next Hip Hop SupaStar and you might be hanging with Xzibit.

Text SUPA to HSTAR (47827) or visit www.hiphopsupastar.com to help decide which Hip Hop SupaStar will win a recording session with an A&R Exec from Sony Music. And they're not the only winner– voting automatically enters you in the Hip Hop SupaStar Flyaway Sweepstakes for a chance to hang with Xzibit on a set. Plus get ringtones from Hip Hop SupaStar contestants and from Xzibit's new album.

Grab the cool Sony Ericsson Z500 with Cingular service and get a free ringtone card plus a free Hip Hop SupaStar faceplate[by mail].

SONY URBAN MUSIC

COLUMBIA

cingular
raising the bar

Sony Ericsson

Free faceplate is a mail-in offer and not redeemable in-store. Free faceplate offer good, while supplies last, when you purchase a Sony Ericsson Z500 phone with a 1-or 2-year service agreement between 2/15/05 and 4/10/05. See a participating Cingular Wireless store for complete details. Hip Hop SupaStar Flyaway Sweepstakes: No purchase necessary. Open to legal residents of the 50 United States/DC, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands who are 16 and older. Sweepstakes begins at 12:01 am on 2/15/05 and ends at 11:59 pm on 4/10/05. Void where prohibited. Complete official rules available at participating Cingular Wireless stores or visit www.hiphopsupastar.com. Phone image is enhanced and simulated. The marble logo is a trademark of Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications AB. The Sony and Ericsson trademarks are used under license from Sony Corporation or Telefonaktiebolaget LM Ericsson, respectively. © 2005 Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications (USA) Inc. All rights reserved. "Sony Urban" and bug are trademarks of, and are used under license from, Sony Corporation. "Columbia" and bug Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Registrada. © 2005 Sony BMG Music Entertainment. ©2005 Cingular Wireless. All rights reserved.

The February 3 eye-gouge photo circulated on the Internet

OUCH!

HOUSTON GOUGES OWN EYE OUT

R&B SINGER HOUSTON gouged out his eye in a London hotel after a possible suicide attempt.

Initial reports indicated the 21-year-old Los Angeles native—who scored a hit last year with "I Like That"—tried to leap from a 13th-floor hotel window but was stopped by bodyguards. When friends locked the singer in his room, he tore into his left eye. A source close to Houston (born Houston Summers IV) claimed the singer, who has been treated for manic depression, said he was "Jesus" and "wanted to go home to his father."

"He said he had to get the devil off his back and that's the only way he could," said bodyguard Marco Powell. "He showed no pain and no remorse."

Houston's sister Billie Summers says the suicide rumor is a lie spread by the singer's ex-managers. Another source claimed Houston, whose eye is healing, had battled drug addiction. *NOEL BODDIE*

WHERE'S COURTNEY

Celebrating her new sobriety and regaining custody of Frances Bean, Love snogs DAVE NAVARRO after jumping onstage with him and his Camp Freddy band in L.A.

NEWS ROUNDUP

The long-awaited OUTKAST movie is tentatively set for a June release. Director Bryan Barber described the work as a "1930s musical" and stated that MACY GRAY is brilliant as a "jaded singer."

FIONA APPLE fan Dave Muscato has launched a campaign calling for the release of her third album, *Extraordinary Machine*, shelved by Sony/BMG since last year. Muscato and associates sent 1,500 apples to label boss Andrew Lack. So far, the record has not made the label's release schedule.

WORD!

"I no longer have time to be creative."

MADONNA, HOUSEWIFE AND MOTHER, EMPLOYER OF A FLEET OF SERVANTS

LIFE AFTER ROCK

Skid Row: "How did you guess we're hair metal?"

ROB AFFUSO
OF SKID ROW

THEN
DRUMMER, SKID ROW
1986 TO 1996

NOW
HORSE-FARM OWNER
UPSTATE NEW YORK

"WHEN DAVE 'SNAKE' Sabo was playing with Bon Jovi, he asked me to audition for them, but I guess I didn't cut the mustard. Later, when he and Rachel [Bolan] were putting Skid Row together in '86, I was asked to join for real.

"The first time we knew we were famous—when we were really hitting—was when we played at the Meadowlands in '89. Normally, after we'd finish a show, we'd sign a few autographs and jump on the bus. This time there was a mass of people waiting for us! State police were called in to make a human chain, and we ended up losing chunks of hair and jewelry.

"WE ENDED UP LOSING CHUNKS OF HAIR AND JEWELRY."

"A combination of the rise of Nirvana, which took the hair-metal genre out at the knees, and lack of support at the record company, caused big internal conflict. It was a downward spiral during the Sub-Human Race tour in '95. Some of us still don't talk to each other.

"I'm from upstate New York and, about six years after that tour, this old cow farm I had seen started calling me and I made an offer. At the time, a lot of farmland in the area was being turned into developments. So I added a fence and built up the property into a horse farm. Doing so raised its value and I decided to make a business out of it. Here at Rainbow Ridge Farm, I have about 10 horses.

"Nowadays, I wake up when I used to be getting home only a couple of years ago. At 8 A.M., I wake up to feed and work with the horses.

"I'm still dealing with shit every day. It's just here the shit comes out of a horse's ass and back then it came out of the record executive's mouth."

AS TOLD TO LAUREN HARRIS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MR. SNUGGLES; MICHAEL BENABIB/RETNA LTD.; COURTESY OF ROB AFFUSO; KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM; ILLUSTRATION BY GARY FRENCH; SPLASH NEWS

IN THE CITY
plugg
JEANS CO.
plugg.com

USEFUL TIPS FROM THE STARS

HOW TO ...

PLAY TEXAS HOLD 'EM

Do your friends have more money than you? Then let Warped tour perennials **UNWRITTEN LAW** show you how to change that situation through the power of poker.

BY STEVE KANDELL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEGO

STYLING BY JOHANNA LABACUENTE; PROP STYLING BY EVAL BARUCH

1 FIND SOME SUCKERS

Scott Russo, lead singer: "Poker's perfect for killing time. We usually play with our manager or roadies, or with other bands like NOFX or Mest while on tour. You need plenty of booze to get the other players nice and drunk—oh, and make sure they have money and they're gullible."

2 GET YOUR HAND

Rob Brewer, guitarist: "My grandma taught me how to play when I was 9. You need two to 10 players, and everyone buys in for $20 worth of chips. The dealer gives each person two cards face-down, then deals five cards that everyone shares to make the best five-card hand."

3 KNOW WHEN TO HOLD 'EM

Pat Kim, bassist: "Poker's great because it's psychological. Study facial expressions, body language and betting patterns. If you have a pair of 10's, go in for the kill and say you're 'all in.' Bet your chips, and whoever wants to stay in has to match you."

4 KNOW WHEN TO FOLD 'EM

Tony Palermo, drummer: "The 2 and 7 cards are the worst. If you get them, just fold. Or bluff if you can pull it off. Always act confident, regardless of your cards. You can win with a pair of 2's if you play it right. Think of the AC/DC song—it's all about big balls."

UNWRITTEN LAW'S ALBUM *HERE'S TO THE MOURNING* (LAVA) IS OUT NOW.

(Left to right): Steve Morris, Pat Kim, Scott Russo, Tony Palermo, Rob Brewer.

ROB: BELT BY AMERICAN EAGLE OUTFITTERS STEVE: WATCH BY GUESS JEANS BY MELTINPOT PAT: HOODIE BY MAVI BELT BY GUESS JEANS BY MELTINPOT TONY: T-SHIRT AND BELT BY GUESS JEANS BY MELTINPOT

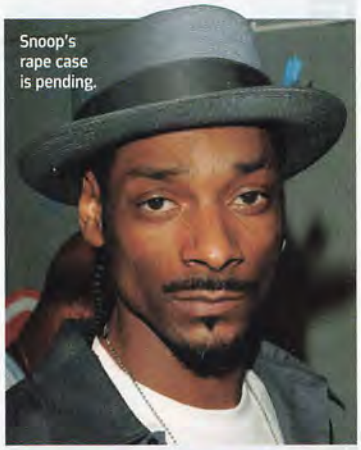
TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Language
Suggestive Themes
Violence

Xenosaga® EPISODE II Jenseits von Gut und Böse & © 2001 2004 NAMCO LTD., ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment America for play on PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the NTSC U/C designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners. Sony Computer Entertainment America takes no responsibility for this offer.

PlayStation.2

namco®
http://xenosaga2.namco.com


Snoop's rape case is pending.

DOGHOUSE!

SNOOP SLAPPED WITH A MULTI-MILLION-DOLLAR RAPE LAWSUIT

A LOS ANGELES WOMAN recently filed a $25 million lawsuit accusing Snoop Dogg of rape.

The alleged incident occurred after a January 2003 taping of ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, which the rapper was guest hosting. According to her suit, Kylie Bell, 36, an Emmy-winning makeup artist, was drinking champagne in Snoop's dressing room when she began feeling "very heavy" and "realized that she had been drugged." She claims she was then sexually assaulted by the rapper and four associates.

Appearing on CNN's *Larry King Live*, Snoop declared his innocence. "I refuse to be another entertainer who writes a check for false allegations," he said. "Rape is not in my nature." *JOSH EELLS*

OBITS

JIM CAPALDI
60, January 28, in London, England, of cancer. Drummer who teamed with Steve Winwood and Dave Mason in the classic rock band Traffic and later wrote and released his own albums.

SPENCER DRYDEN
66, January 10, in Petaluma, California, of cancer. Drummer who played on many of the hits for '60s psych-rock band Jefferson Airplane.

JIMMY GRIFFIN
61, January 11, in Franklin, Tennessee, of cancer. Co-founder of the soft-rock combo Bread, who won an Oscar for "For All We Know" from the movie *Baby Maker*.

MERLE KILGORE
70, February 6, in Mexico, of heart failure. Legendary country music star and manager of Hank Williams Jr. Co-wrote Johnny Cash's 1963 hit "Ring of Fire" with June Carter and 1960's "Love Has Made You Beautiful," his biggest solo hit.

Pete and Kate photographed together in London, January 26.

Jail/Love Bird

Ex-Libertine Pete Doherty back in jail, in love with Kate Moss

ONLY WEEKS AFTER beginning a relationship with supermodel Kate Moss, ex-Libertine Pete Doherty spent four days in jail for assault, robbery and blackmail. The singer attacked Max Carlish, a photographer who sold pictures of the drug-addled musician smoking heroin to U.K. newspapers. Carlish claims Doherty, 25, approached him in a bid to extort money. "He wanted thousands [of pounds] and I knew he was going to go out and spend it on heroin," said Carlish. "He was desperate for a fix. I said 'no' and he went berserk, punching me."

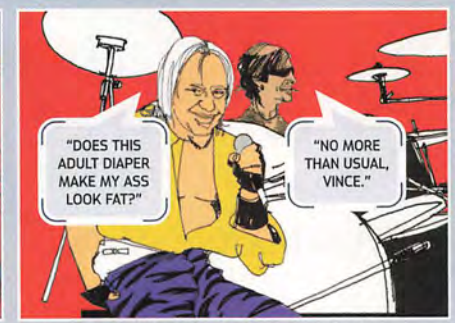
Since being fired from the Libertines last year, Doherty has fronted his own band, Babyshambles. The final night of their December tour was canceled when Doherty failed to show up. The gig before that ended in a riot, with the incoherent singer dragged off stage by management.

Attention on Doherty, already a U.K. tabloid staple, intensified when he hooked up with Moss at her 31st birthday party in January. "I think it will last ... I believe her when she says she loves me, and I know I mean it when I say I love her," he said. Moss has not spoken publicly about the affair. *DORIAN LYNSKEY*

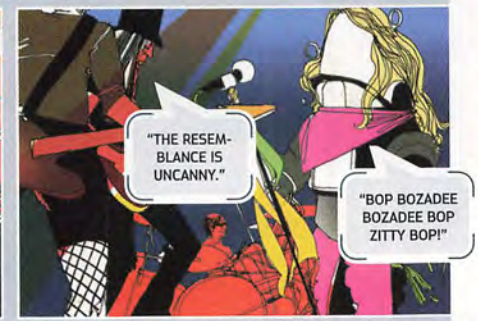
POP HISTORY

2041 MÖTLEY CRÜE RE-FORM. AGAIN!

August 2041: Vince, Nikki, Mick and Tommy announce they will play one last tour to pay for, respectively, their twelfth, seventh, ninth and twenty-third divorces.



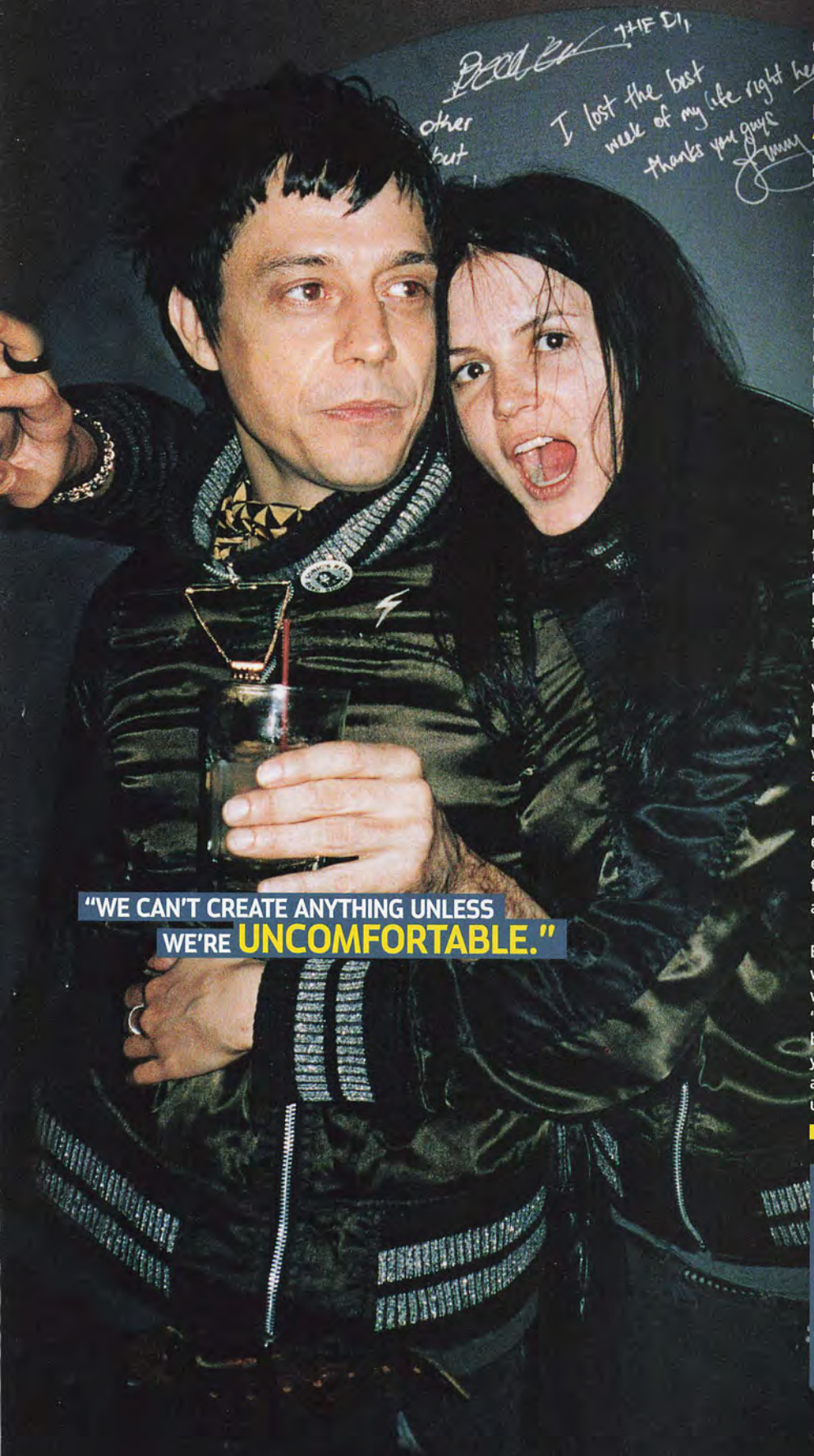
After a fight with Tommy during rehearsals, Vince refuses to play the shows and quits the band.



The rest of the band decide to replace him with a robotic David Lee Roth impersonator.

WRITTEN BY CLARK COLLIS ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN JAY

SNOOP: TODD WILLIAMSON/FILMMAGIC.COM; MOSS: RAMEY PHOTO



"WE CAN'T CREATE ANYTHING UNLESS WE'RE UNCOMFORTABLE."

The Kills

PILL-POPPING ROCKERS MAKE A BIG, BAD NOISE

BY JONAH WEINER
PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNETH CAPPELLO

"I DON'T LIKE the sun," says Alison Mosshart. "It doesn't agree with me." Squinting through jet-black bangs, the female half of the Kills is painting her nails dark violet. Across the table in her Chelsea Hotel suite, Jamie Hince sucks a cigarette slowly and fidgets with his second-hand Günter Grass novel. Sitting in the room once inhabited by Edie Sedgwick, the '60s pop-art icon who OD'd at the age of 28, it's immediately clear why these two didn't name themselves, say, the Cuddles.

Florida-born Mosshart, 26, (stage name: VV) met British native Hince, 28, (a.k.a. Hotel) in London in 1998. "We were fascinated with each other," she recalls, although the two deny being romantically involved (you wouldn't know it from their intensely sexualized live show). "We spent a lot of time talking and playing records. But I lived in Florida, so we spent six months sending tapes back and forth, making songs that way. Finally I decided to move there."

London's drizzle and gloom fit Mosshart's vampiric constitution, and the pen pals quickly flourished into a two-piece guitar band, backed by recorded and electronic drums. "The things we were doing sounded like they'd fall apart at any moment," Hince grins.

That sense of volatility pervades the Kills' major-label debut, *No Wow*, a bluesy, punky exploration of violence, sex and emptiness evocative of PJ Harvey. "The Good Ones," Hince tells us, is about an aimless night "taking cab after cab searching for pills."

The album was recorded in a warehouse in Benton Harbor, Michigan, a cold, run-down city where plywood planks seem to outnumber windows. The pair say they thrive off isolation. "Art was always something I did locked in my bedroom," says Hince. "You work better when you're hungry and haven't slept in three days," adds Mosshart. "We can't create anything unless we're uncomfortable." *JONAH WEINER*

OUT NOW NO WOW *ROUGH TRADE/RCA*

ALL ABOUT US!

OBSESSED WITH
HINCE: "Eavesdropping in diners and bars."

FUNNIEST MOVIE EVER
MOSSHART: "I don't like comedies."

LEAST FAVORITE SONG
HINCE: "Anything by Shaggy. He makes me want to kill."

FUN-DANCE!

BEFORE THE CELEBRITIES ATTENDING THE *BLENDER* SESSIONS AT THIS YEAR'S **SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL** COULD START PARTYING THEIR ASSES OFF, THEY HAD TO ANSWER ONE SIMPLE QUESTION ...

WOULD YOU RATHER PARTY WITH ROCK STARS OR MOVIE STARS?

"Probably actors, but I did get to party with Keith Richards. Was it debaucherous? We drank all night. But, if you're Keith Richards, I'm not sure that really counts as debauchery."
JAMES WOODS

"Rock stars. They've got better stamina. Actors have to stay alert on set. Musicians just have to stay alive."
THORA BIRCH

"Both of them, man. They both know how to get down."
LUDACRIS

"I avoid hanging out with actors—they're always pretending to be someone else. The only thing I hate more than indie music are indie movies. Wait, you're writing this down? Don't write this down, I'm kidding!"
ADAM SCHLESINGER, FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE

"Rock stars definitely behave worse. You can get away with more in a band. I know—I'm in a band."
EDDIE THOMAS OF *AMERICAN PIE*

"Being a musician doesn't really allow me to act any crazier than being an actress. But it does allow me to dominate!"
JULIETTE LEWIS

JULIETTE LEWIS, SINGING (AND EXERCISING) WITH HER BAND, THE LICKS.

LUDACRIS, SHOUTING OUT TO UTAH, AGAIN.

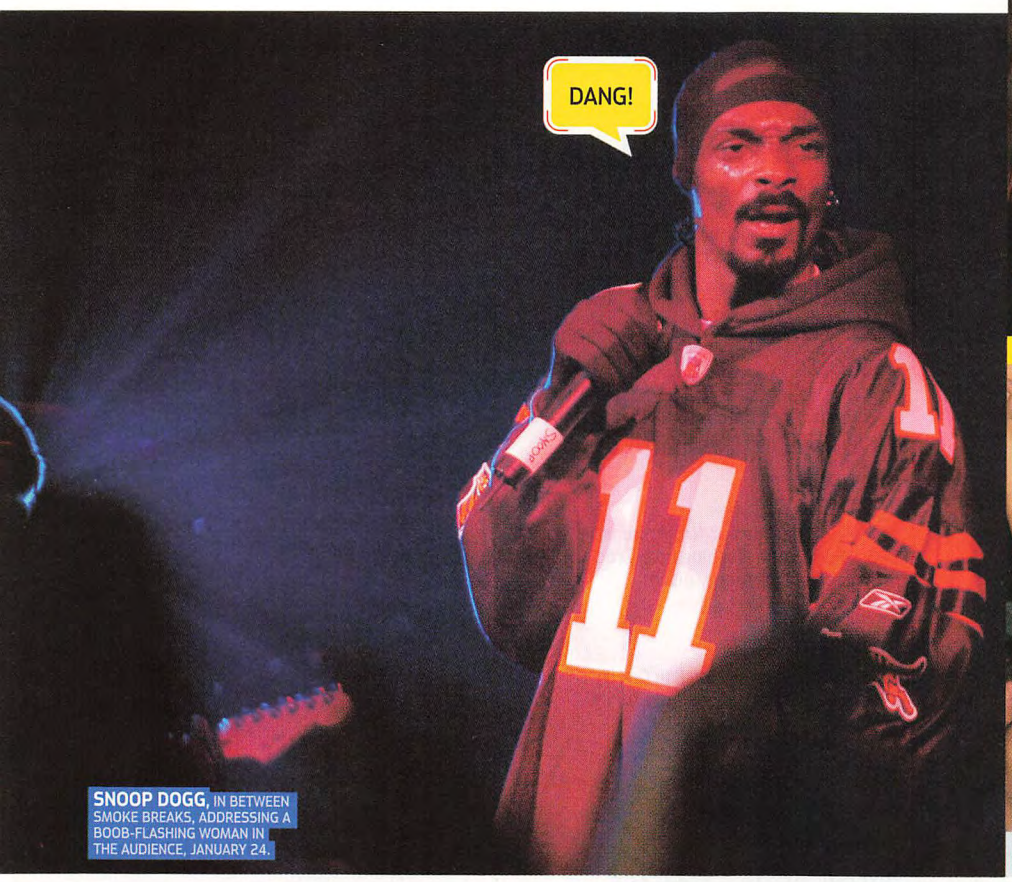
CARMEN ELECTRA, STAR OF FESTIVAL SCREENER *DIRTY LOVE.*

THE KINGS OF LEON BEFORE THEIR CELEB-PACKED SET.

TOP: KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM (2); BOTTOM: DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS/WIREIMAGE.COM (2)

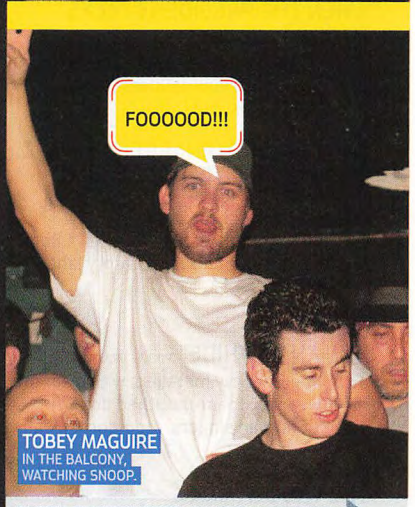
MINIUSA.COM

MINI is not associated with any phone manufacturer. ©2004 MINI, a division of BMW of North America, LLC. The MINI name and logo are registered trademarks.



SNOOP DOGG, IN BETWEEN SMOKE BREAKS, ADDRESSING A BOOB-FLASHING WOMAN IN THE AUDIENCE, JANUARY 24.

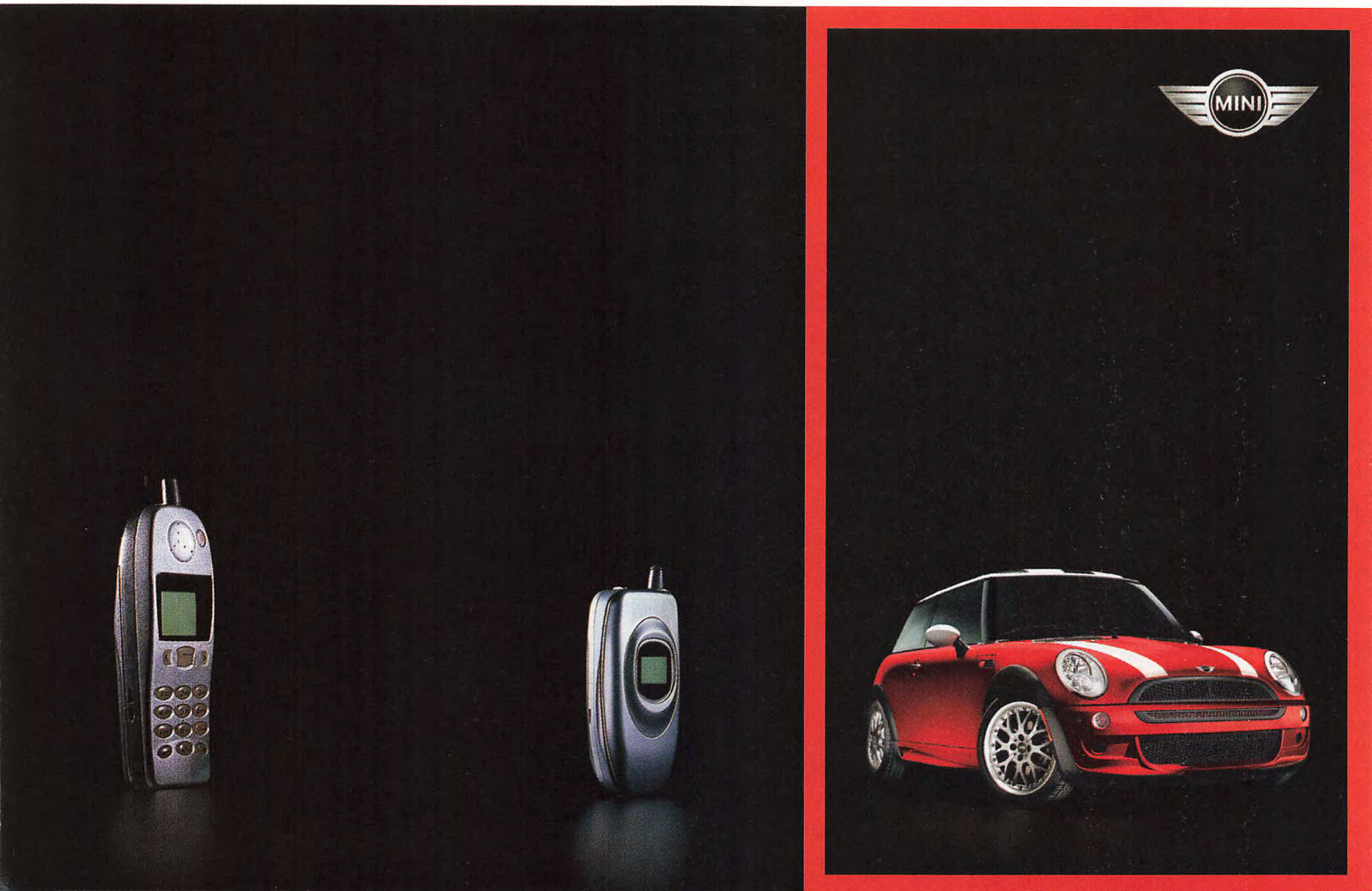
GLENN CLOSE CLUTCHING HER FAVORITE MAGAZINE.



TOBEY MAGUIRE IN THE BALCONY, WATCHING SNOOP.

SEE PAGE 53 FOR MORE SUNDANCE PHOTOS.

SNOOP/MAGUIRE: DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS/WIREIMAGE.COM; CLOSE: JAMIE MCCARTHY/WIREIMAGE.COM



20 SONGS YOU SHOULD DOWNLOAD THIS MONTH

1 BRIGHT EYES
"WHEN THE PRESIDENT TALKS TO GOD" *SADDLE CREEK*
A bluesy iTunes freebie, in which young Oberst spits, snarls and slices into Dubya's "faith."

2 SNOOP DOGG, PHARRELL & JAY-Z
"DROP IT LIKE IT'S HOT (REMIX)"
STAR TRAK/GEFFEN
A must for its bizarre new Neptunes beat, Pharrell's Ron Artest shout-out and Jay-Z's spry jabs at R. Kelly.

3 CANINUS
"HUMAN RAWHIDE" *PITBULL GRINDCORE*
Vegan heavy metallers with a secret weapon: foam-mouthed dogs in place of human singers. Alpo-core rules!

4 MARS VOLTA
"THE WIDOW" *UNIVERSAL*
Like Soundgarden jamming with Rush jamming with Meatloaf!

5 50 CENT
"CANDY SHOP" *G-UNIT/AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE*
Curtis Jackson is back and seriously hankering for a hummer.

6 KASABIAN
"CLUB FOOT" *RCA*
This Brit foursome sound like Radiohead, when Radiohead rawk.

7 MARTHA WAINWRIGHT
"BLOODY MOTHER FUCKING ASSHOLE" *ZOE/ROUNDER*
The daughter of folk hero Loudon Wainwright fires off a vivid rant bristling with loneliness and spite.

8 DAFT PUNK
"ROBOT ROCK" *VIRGIN*
The kings of "frogtronica" return, slashing heavy rock riffs across high-energy disco.

9 BECK
"HELL YES" *INTERSCOPE*
Saddo no more! Back in *Odelay* mode, Beck Hansen gets funky.

10 ELEPHANT MAN
"YUH NUH BADMIND" *[MIXTAPE]*
This dancehall wacko party-starts over a "Footloose" riddim—who gwan test Kenny Loggins?!

11 QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE
"IN MY HEAD" *INTERSCOPE*
Josh Homme cribs a concept from Kylie Minogue and lays it over chugging stoner rock.

12 KAISER CHIEFS
"I PREDICT A RIOT" *UNIVERSAL*
Paranoid, rabblerousing post-punk from the U.K.'s latest haircuts.

Kaiser Chiefs: "Look, are you going to buzz us in or not?"

13 THE GAME FEAT. 50 CENT
"HATE IT OR LOVE IT"
G-UNIT/AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE
Unexpectedly somber reflections about 'hood ambitiousness, sneaker fetishes and 50's bisexual mom.

14 LADY SOVEREIGN
"RANDOM" *CASUAL*
From North London, this self-described "white midget" MC raps like a Borg with an attitude problem.

15 AMERIE
"ONE THING" *COLUMBIA*
An R&B understudy sets her sights on Beyoncé's Manolos, gliding and skipping across a choppy funk loop and monstrous, clattering drums.

16 BEANIE SIGEL
"FEEL IT IN THE AIR" *ROC-A-FELLA*
A weepy '80s soft-rock sample supplies the sorrow Beanie's too macho to display.

17 X PLASTAZ
"MSIMU KWA MSIMU" *OUT HERE*
From Northern Tanzania, a raucous Maasai hip-hop anthem full of spirited call-and-response—and Swahili speed-rapping!

18 NEW YOUNG PONY CLUB
"ICE CREAM" *TIRK*
Blasé-robot-sex-slave vocals, funky bassline squirms and a disco pulse propel this underground dance-rock 12-inch.

19 MARK RONSON
"B.O.B. & ROSES/TAKE YOU HOME" *THE RUB*
Andre & Big Boi run roughshod over Franz Ferdinand's "Take Me Out."

20 FLAMING LIPS
"SEVEN NATION ARMY" *AZULI*
This feedback-drenched cover offsets Donald Rumsfeld digs with Sidney Poitier nods, making for one oblique assault on the Bush White House.

ICON KEY
SADDOES
HIPSTERS
RAWK
AGING HIPSTERS
CRUNKY
SUPERSTAR POP

JASON KELVIN & STEVIE DEAN

GO TO NAPSTER.COM TO DOWNLOAD THESE AND OTHER SONGS.

BLENDER SESSIONS

JANUARY 2005

Vivica Fox

Scott Wolf and Neve Campbell

Jenny McCarthy

THIS JANUARY, *BLENDER* packed its parkas and headed out to Park City, Utah, for another amazing installment of Blender Sessions, five nights of electrifying concerts at Main Street watering hole Harry O's. Audiences were treated to intimate performances by the Crystal Method, the Exies, Juliette and the Licks, Kings of Leon, Fountains of Wayne, Dashboard Confessional, Ludacris and Snoop Dogg!

Snoop takes the stage

Vanessa Carlton

Brooke Burns

Kings Of Leon

Juliette and The Licks

The jam-packed Blender Sessions crowd

Harry O's staff

Harry O's, the hub of Main St

ALL PHOTOS: WIRE IMAGE

BLENDER WOULD LIKE TO THANK ITS SPONSORS

BUDWEISER 13 TRUE MUSIC

Ben Sherman

NAUTICA JEANS COMPANY

Le TIGRE

OAKLEY THUMP

MOTOR HARLEY-DAVIDSON CYCLES

Main Street 13

MP Meltin'Pot

DC DCSHOECOUSA

CRUNK!!! ENERGY DRINK

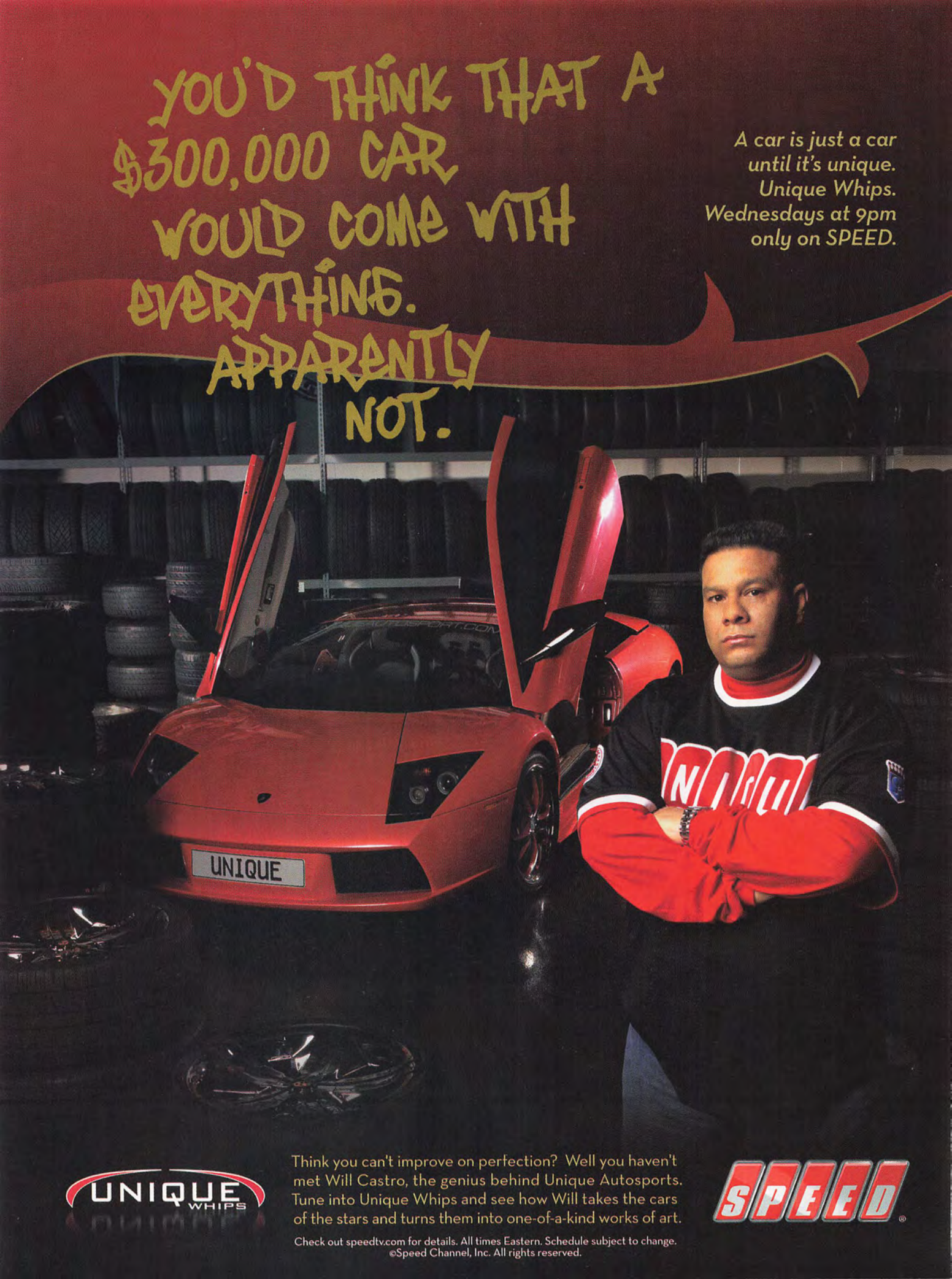
Naked

GARNIER FRUCTIS

vitaminwater GLACÉAU

iriver

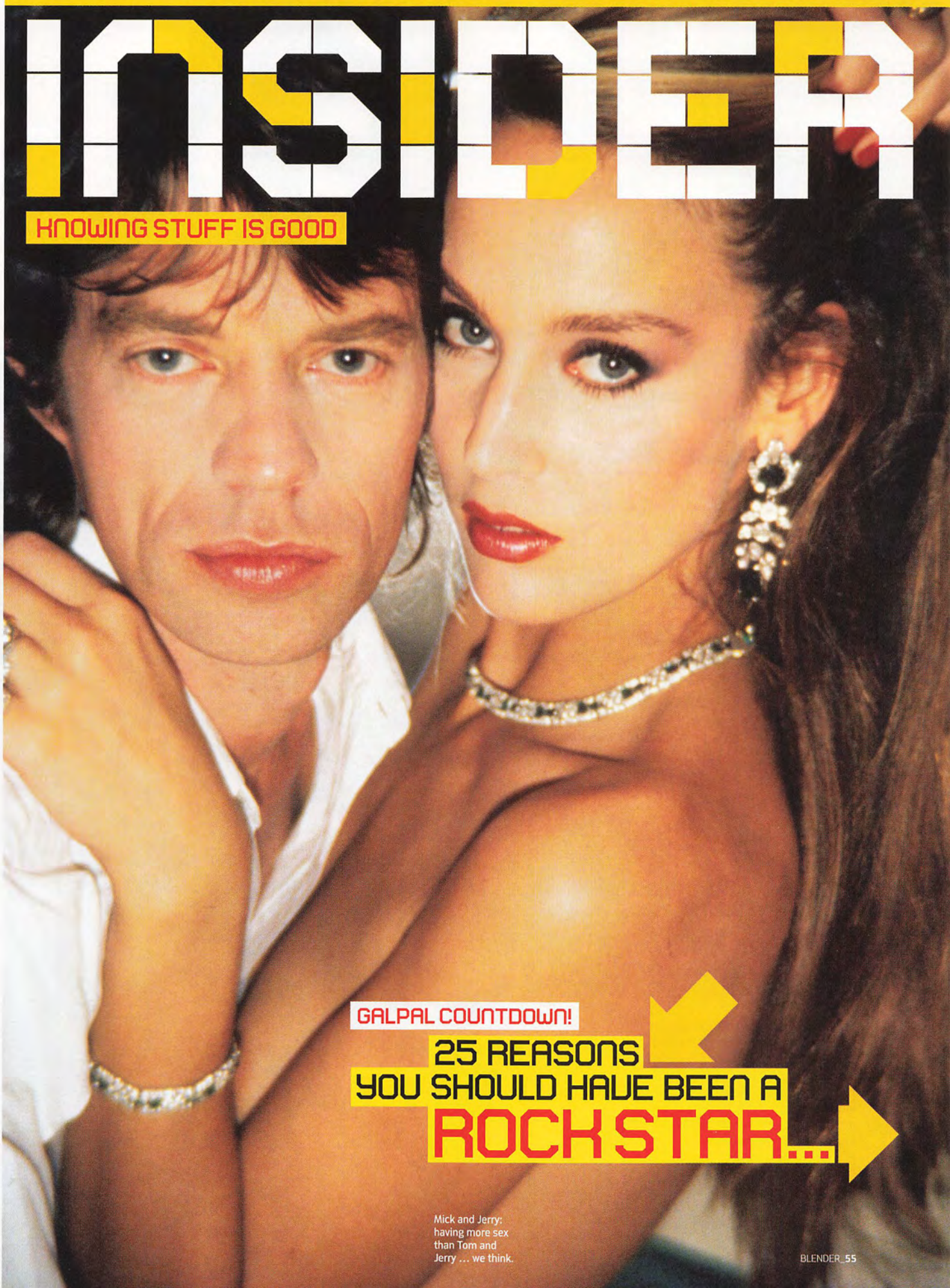
KENNETH COLE REACTION


YOU'D THINK THAT A $300,000 CAR WOULD COME WITH EVERYTHING. APPARENTLY NOT.
A car is just a car until it's unique. Unique Whips. Wednesdays at 9pm only on SPEED.
UNIQUE
UNIQUE WHIPS
Think you can't improve on perfection? Well you haven't met Will Castro, the genius behind Unique Autosports. Tune into Unique Whips and see how Will takes the cars of the stars and turns them into one-of-a-kind works of art.
SPEED
Check out speedtv.com for details. All times Eastern. Schedule subject to change.
©Speed Channel, Inc. All rights reserved.

MY MUSIC P64 50 CENT P66 GREATEST SONGS EVER P70 ASK BLENDER P72

INSIDER

KNOWING STUFF IS GOOD



GALPAL COUNTDOWN!

25 REASONS YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN A ROCK STAR...

Mick and Jerry: having more sex than Tom and Jerry ... we think.

NORMAN PARKINSON/CORBIS SYGMA

Stephanie Seymour: "Oh my god, I've forgotten my clothes—again!"

THE 25 HOTTEST ROCK & ROLL GALPALS

SOME ARE SUPERMODELS. SOME ARE OSCAR-WINNING ACTRESSES. AND AT LEAST ONE IS A KLEPTOMANIAC. *BLENDER* SALUTES THE BETTER HALVES OF MUSIC'S LUCKIEST BASTARDS.

BY MIKE ALBO, CLARK COLLIS, STEVE KANDELL, BEN MITCHELL AND JONAH WEINER

25

APPETITE FOR SEDUCTION

STEPHANIE SEYMOUR

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Axl Rose (1991–1993)

HOT BECAUSE: Impeccable modeling credentials—notably Victoria's Secret and *Sports Illustrated*—got the statuesque Seymour cast as Axl's bride in Guns N' Roses' "November Rain" video. Ditched Warren Beatty after meeting the sensitive frontman on set. Take that, Hollywood! Preposterous hard-rock fantasy became reality when Axl proposed.

NOT BECAUSE: Now every wedding not interrupted by an impromptu cliff-top guitar solo looks rather dull.

HERB RITTS/VISAGES

24

LIKED A ROLLING STONE

BIANCA JAGGER

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Mick Jagger (1970–1979)

HOT BECAUSE: Uniquely combined Latin exoticism, fashionista Euro-cool and Andy Warhol–befriending New York nightclub queen status. And was your significant other ever photographed sitting astride a horse on the dance floor of ultra-legendary New York disco Studio 54? Thought not.

NOT BECAUSE: Keith Richards said, "I think she had a bigger negative influence on Mick than anyone would have thought possible."

23

PETITE POWERHOUSE

JADA PINKETT SMITH

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Will Smith (1995–present)

HOT BECAUSE: Ever since she was on *A Different World*, Pinkett has had the steely, no-nonsense look of a woman tough enough to kick your ass if you crossed her. Even now, as a mother of two, her longstanding cred (she was a high school friend of Tupac's) makes her way cooler than her slightly dorky husband.

NOT BECAUSE: At only five feet tall, she's just a few inches away from needing children's clothing.

22

FLIRTS SO GOOD

ELAINE IRWIN MELLENCAMP

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: John Mellencamp (1991–present)

HOT BECAUSE: The Ralph Lauren model turned rocker wife when she married Mellencamp in 1992, becoming the catalogue fantasy for every short Midwestern guy with a guitar. Oh—and the mother of two relaxes by racing cars in her spare time, becoming in 2001 the first female pace car driver in the Indy 500.

NOT BECAUSE: She has appeared on the cover of *Golf for Women*.

21

AUTO EROTICA

TAWNY KITAEN

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: John Taylor (Duran Duran; 1984), Tommy Lee (1985), Robbin Crosby (Ratt; 1980), David Coverdale (1986–1990)

HOT BECAUSE: Pioneered the role of girlfriend as video vixen in her work with ex-husband Coverdale's band Whitesnake, infamously buffing the hood of a Jaguar with her scantily-clad calisthenics in "Here I Go Again."

NOT BECAUSE: In 2002, she was charged with spousal abuse for battering six-foot-six Cleveland Indians pitcher Chuck Finley.

20

APPLE OF HIS EYE

GWYNETH PALTROW

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Chris Martin (Coldplay; 2002–present)

HOT BECAUSE: The rock & roll Grace Kelly, who isn't as patrician and stiff as we always thought. Despite her rep as a high-society ice queen, the Oscar-baiting starlet had the good sense to ditch Ben Affleck and get her perfectly manicured hands dirty in the relatively grimy rock world.

NOT BECAUSE: She named her child after a fruit.

19

UPTOWN GIRL

CHRISTIE BRINKLEY

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Billy Joel (1982–1994)

HOT BECAUSE: The woman for whom the very term "supermodel" was coined. Although one of the most beautiful women to ever fill a bikini, she's not afraid to keep it real by sidling up next to balding, bug-eyed, pasty men, either in real life or in the movies (*National Lampoon's Vacation*).

NOT BECAUSE: The cover she designed for Joel's *River of Dreams* is as hard to look at as the album is to listen to.

TOP: L TO R: ANDY WARHOL/CORBIS; DAVE ALLOCCA/REUTERS/CORBIS; DAVE ALLOCCA/STRINGER/GETTY IMAGES; BOTTOM: PALTROW: EVERETT COLLECTION; BRINKLEY: KOBAL COLLECTION

"I'M NOT ATTRACTED TO NORMAL"

Dishing the dirt with four of rock's most delectable galpals.

HOW DO YOU HOOK UP WITH A ROCK STAR, LADIES? SNEAK BACKSTAGE? BANG ON THEIR HOTEL DOOR?

TAWNY KITAEN I had my manager call Duran Duran's manager and say I wanted to meet John Taylor, because he was so damn cute. He invited me down to a concert in San Diego, and we started dating.

TERA PATRICK I saw Evan [Seinfeld] on his TV show *Oz*, and I thought he was really hot. My friend Anna said, "Oh my god, no! He's a womanizing pig! You can do way better than that." But I used to lay awake wondering, "Who's gonna marry me?" I had all these fears. Who's gonna bring a porn star home to mom? And now I have a Jewish mother-in-law who loves me.

CARMEN ELECTRA Dave and I were set up on a blind date, and it was love at first sight.

DITA VON TEESE [Marilyn] Manson was a fan of mine—he was a member of my Web site—and he had his people call my people about being in a music video. Then he stole my phone number and started calling me. On our first date, I flew to see him play on his birthday in 2001.

DID YOU GIVE IT UP QUICKLY, OR DID YOU MAKE THEM WAIT?

DITA VON TEESE It was his birthday, so he didn't have to work that hard for it. [Laughs.] I was on the plane to go see him, looking through a magazine, and I saw a picture of my boyfriend at the time with a supermodel. Obviously, they were together. It was the last straw.

TERA PATRICK Evan and I talked on the phone for a month, and he came to L.A. to meet me. We stayed in the house for four days. I didn't even answer the phone.

CARMEN ELECTRA I tried to make Dave wait as long as I could. That was about three dates. [Laughs.]

TAWNY KITAEN I made David Coverdale wait about three

18

ALMOST PERFECT

KATE HUDSON

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Chris Robinson (Black Crowes; 2000–present)

HOT BECAUSE: The ideal California blonde—who won't mind helping you separate your seeds from your stems. She played ultimate groupie Penny Lane in *Almost Famous*, and then used what she learned in real life—going on the road with the Black Crowes and explaining that she has "no problem" with anyone smoking grass.

NOT BECAUSE: All her other films reek.

Kate Hudson always builds her own bidets.

17

PORN QUEEN

TERA PATRICK

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Evan Seinfeld (Biohazard; 2002–present)

HOT BECAUSE: Smarter than your average adult movie star, Patrick worked as a nurse before abandoning her uniform—and the rest of her clothes—to appear in *Asian Street Hookers 7*. And while most of her porn peers resemble insomniac crack whores, the half-Thai Tera doesn't look like someone who has starred in, for example, *Please! Cum Inside Me 2*.

NOT BECAUSE: Has starred in, for example, *Please! Cum Inside Me 2*.

16

TEXAS ROSE

JERRY HALL

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: Bryan Ferry (1973–1977), Mick Jagger (1977–1999)

HOT BECAUSE: The leggy blonde supermodel of choice for Britain's '70s rock frontmen. Appeared on cover of Roxy Music's album *Siren*, then ditched Roxy singer Ferry for Jagger. Claims to have inspired the classic hit "Miss You" (although so does her predecessor, Bianca Jagger).

NOT BECAUSE: Personal hero is Nixon-era Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

15

A GHOUL'S BEST FRIEND

DITA VON TEESE

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Marilyn Manson (2001–present)

HOT BECAUSE: No bleached-blonde arm charm, burlesque star Von Teese—who changed her name from the pornalicious Heather Sweet—is more innocent, wicked and, above all, classy than any of her fellow centerfolds at *Playboy*. A solid dresser who never sacrifices style for comfort, she doesn't even own a pair of jeans.

NOT BECAUSE: Her 16-inch waist suggests you're not going to be eating out—or indeed at all—too often.

14

KNOCKOUT POUT

LIV TYLER

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Royston Langdon (Spacehog; 1998–present)

HOT BECAUSE: Extraordinarily desirable even as *The Lord of the Rings*' jug-eared elf Arwen, girl-next-door Liv is proof that record sales aren't the be-all and end-all when it comes to attracting A-list Hollywood talent. Guaranteed backstage access to Aerosmith, but don't expect to have too much fun in dad's dressing room.

NOT BECAUSE: Claims to get beauty tips from her father, which doesn't seem entirely sensible.

TOP: GEORGE LANGE/CORBIS OUTLINE; BOTTOM: PATRICK: COURTESY OF VIVID; VON TEESE: PEROU; TYLER: KOBAL COLLECTION

13

JUST WHAT HE NEEDED

PAULINA PORIZKOVA

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Ric Ocasek (1984–present)

HOT BECAUSE: More than merely attractive, she's a patron saint to every gangly, bespectacled nerd in the universe. It's a testament to this Czech beauty's taboo-busting open-mindedness that, despite fronting one of the most successful pop bands of the past 25 years, the Cars frontman is best known to the general public for pulling off the least likely rock-star marriage this side of Lyle and Julia.

NOT BECAUSE: Turned down a part as the Bond girl in *Goldeneye* to spend more time with her Lurch-like paramour.

And that's how Paulina Porizkova got the dumbest sun tan ever.

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED

months. I made Tommy Lee wait about four weeks. That's quick for me! Look, the way you get these guys is, you *don't* sleep with them. The girls that give it up quickly are called groupies.

DO MUSICIANS MAKE GOOD BOYFRIENDS?

TERA PATRICK No, not at all. You have to deal with women throwing themselves at him.

CARMEN ELECTRA No. They can basically have whoever they want. But Dave is a bad boy who has a good heart. He's already done everything.

TAWNY KITAEN I dated Van Halen's manager, and we'd go to the Bahamas with David Lee Roth. If he had to travel with any narcotics, he'd shove it in my bag. We'd get in a car and drive David down Sunset Boulevard, looking for hookers, and then he'd bring 'em back to our house while I laid in my bedroom crying. "I can't believe we have a hooker in the house!"

DITA VON TEESE I dated another singer, and he was a typical rock star, a full-on sex addict. I was like, I'm never doing this again. I gave Manson a warning: "I'm not really into being one of 15 girls, or saying, 'It's okay if you get a blow job, but not okay if you fuck.'" But he's far more jealous than I am.

CARMEN ELECTRA I don't think I would ever allow someone I was dating to get a blow job—unless of course it was my idea.

ARE MUSICIANS HARDER TO PLEASE SEXUALLY? ARE THEY KINKIER?

DITA VON TEESE Gosh, that's a pretty private subject. I'll say this: I'm a fetish supermodel. I do everything. There's nothing taboo to me. I'm probably more adventurous than he is.

TERA PATRICK Evan had more mileage on him than me. When we met, I'd had maybe 20 sexual partners, and I'd worked with another 10 or 11 guys in porn. I'd had under 40 sexual partners in my whole life. I'd venture to guess he's slept with close to 1,000 girls.

SO, TERA, WAS YOUR FRIEND RIGHT? WAS EVAN A WOMANIZING PIG?

TERA PATRICK We were at the

Rainbow in L.A. one night, and an ex-girlfriend of Evan's showed up. She was a groupie, she'd met him backstage. And she said, "I've never seen him so happy. He just seems so in love with you. And I really hope things work out with you, because I was hoping to go home with you guys." She goes, "Evan is kind of famous for that." I was nervous the first couple times I was with him, because he was used to threesomes and foursomes.

WOULD YOU EVER DATE AN ACCOUNTANT?

TAWNY KITAEN Absolutely. If he was a bad boy.

CARMEN ELECTRA I've dated gangsters, background dancers, but I don't think I've ever dated anyone normal. I'm not attracted to normal.

WHEN YOU'RE DATING A ROCK STAR, ARE YOU OUT PARTYING EVERY NIGHT?

TAWNY KITAEN With Tommy, he was constantly doing coke, so he wanted to go out. He just wore me out. I remember one night, we were lying on top of the bed and he took out two knives. He was trying to teach me how to throw a knife. "You hold the tip of the knife, and—" boom! By the end of the evening there must have been about 5,000 knife marks in the wall. That was his idea of a good time.

TERA PATRICK Ninety percent of the time, we're home watching *Law & Order*. I loved Jerry Orbach. When he died—oh, you don't even know! And Sam Waterston is very sexy. You can print that!

CARMEN ELECTRA Dave and I love to TiVo *Forensic Files*, order sushi and sit in front of the TV. It's not whips and chains every night. Only every now and then.

DITA VON TEESE Yeah, Manson and I don't beat each other every night. We like to watch dating shows, like *Elimidate*, because it's a world we know nothing about.

ARE HIS FANS NICE TO YOU?

DITA VON TEESE For a long time, I got hate mail from his fans, saying I wasn't good enough for him, wasn't smart enough for their God. I got the same e-mail from different girls: "He comes to me in my dreams, we're meant to be together." People have threatened to kill me. ➜

12

RAVEN-HAIRED GOOD WITCH

ROSE MCGOWAN

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Marilyn Manson (1998–2001)

HOT BECAUSE: No one has wedded sex and the occult so potently since Elvira. The God of Fuck was undoubtedly drawn to the voluptuous *Charmed* starlet by her intriguing background of European refinement (raised in Italy) and cult creepiness (her father ran a commune devoted to the Children of God cult).

NOT BECAUSE: She now dates a magazine editor. *Borrrrr-ing*!

11

TENACIOUS C

CARMEN ELECTRA

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: Prince (1991–1993), B-Real (1994–1998), Dave Navarro (2002–present)

HOT BECAUSE: The Energizer Bunny of the L.A. party set, she hasn't let a string of difficult relationships dissuade her from getting back on the horse every time. Perseverance recently rewarded with marriage to Dave Navarro.

NOT BECAUSE: Her husband wears more makeup than she does.

10

SPACE ODDITY

IMAN

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: David Bowie (1990–present)

HOT BECAUSE: Like her vaguely alien husband, the 49-year-old Somali is both exotic-looking and seemingly ageless, and is renowned as the first black supermodel. But her most impressive accomplishment may have been turning David Bowie unequivocally heterosexual.

NOT BECAUSE: Once kissed Michael Jackson in a video. On the lips.

9

FIRESTARTER!

DREW BARRYMORE

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: Eric Erlandson (Hole; 1994–1996), Fab Moretti (The Strokes; 2002–present)

HOT BECAUSE: By 15, she'd tried rehab and suicide and wrecked her career—today, she's an A-list star, fledgling mogul and No. 1 Strokes fan. A short-lived 2001 marriage to comedian Tom Green proved she hadn't lost her wild side—or her sense of humor.

NOT BECAUSE: Her family makes the Mansons look like the Partridges.

8

BEAUTIFUL BAD GIRL

WINONA RYDER

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: Dave Pirner (Soul Asylum; 1994–1996), Beck (2000), Pete Yorn (2001), Page Hamilton (Helmet; 2003–present)

HOT BECAUSE: The sullen idol of a generation of dorks and misfits—and the A-list consort of an entire MTV2 playlist of unwashed rock poets. Her doe-eyed vulnerability was only enhanced by her cry-for-help Saks shoplifting.

NOT BECAUSE: She might be a downer: In 2001, police found a syringe and eight meds, including Vicodin and Percocet, in her pocketbook.

7

KRAUT ROCKS!

HEIDI KLUM

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: Anthony Kiedis (2002), Seal (2004–present)

HOT BECAUSE: Being a top model and German, the chances of Heidi's having a sense of humor seem slim. But whether yodeling on *The Late Show With David Letterman*, sending herself up on *Spin City* or bouncing back from a failed marriage to homely hairdresser Ric Pipino, the Teutonic glamazon's self-aware perkiness is a rare treat in the haughty fashion universe.

NOT BECAUSE: Did we mention she's German?

TOP: L TO R: JUSTIN STEPHENS; ROBERT ASHCROFT/CONTOURPHOTOS.COM; JIM SPELLMAN/WIREIMAGE.COM; BOTTOM: BARRYMORE: EVERETT COLLECTION; KLUM: JASON NEVADER/WIREIMAGE.COM

6

SPICY DANISH

HELENA CHRISTENSEN

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: Michael Hutchence (INXS; 1990–1995), Billy Corgan (Smashing Pumpkins; 1997–1998)

HOT BECAUSE: At a time when fellow supermodels Cindy and Claudia were hooking up with stiffs like Richard Gere and David Copperfield, Helena was doing what catwalk starlets should do: appearing in videos (Chris Isaak's "Wicked Game") and dating wholly unsuitable musicians. Also speaks six languages, doesn't believe in marriage and enjoys housework.

NOT BECAUSE: She's a big fan of the Smiths. Let the party begin!

STEEN SUNDLAND

Despite her limited beach volleyball skills, Helena was always picked for the team.

DO HIS BUDDIES ALWAYS ASK TO BE FIXED UP WITH YOUR FRIENDS?

TERA PATRICK The guys in Agnostic Front and Hatebreed are like, "Hey Tera, can you hook me up with Bryanna Banks? Do you know Jenna Jameson?" But I refuse, because all the porn stars and models I know are completely crazy.

DID YOU HAVE ANY PET NAMES FOR ONE ANOTHER?

CARMEN ELECTRA Dave calls me "Mouse" or "Bird."

TERA PATRICK I call him "Pookie." Evan "Pookie" Seinfeld.

TAWNY KITAEN Tommy would call me "Shnookie Bookie Bookie Boo." Tommy's just a real cuddly love bug.

YEAH. A CUDDLY LOVE BUG WITH A HUGE COCK.

TAWNY KITAEN You know, he's not the only one who's built like that ....

DOES A ROCK STAR HOG ALL YOUR MAKEUP AND HAIRSPRAY?

DITA VON TEESE I lost my luggage on one trip, and all my makeup was in it. So I used Manson's. And he's taken a few of my makeup tips.

CARMEN ELECTRA We have separate bathrooms, and it takes Dave equally as long to get ready when we go out somewhere.

TAWNY KITAEN One night, Coverdale was taking off his makeup after a gig, and I go, "What are you using?" He goes, "Well, I'm using these wipes." I go, "Those are hemorrhoid pads!" He'd been wiping his face with Tucks. Needless to say, he had no bumps on his face.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF YOUR DAUGHTER ASKED FOR ADVICE ABOUT DATING A ROCK STAR?

CARMEN ELECTRA Run for the hills!

TAWNY KITAEN I'd say, fine. Tommy got a reputation for throwing a few photographers around or whatever, but he's one of the sweetest guys you'll ever know.

CARMEN ELECTRA There are good ones out there.

ROB TANNENBAUM

5

GOT MILF?

RACHEL HUNTER

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Rod Stewart (1990–1999)

HOT BECAUSE: A stunning blonde even by Rockin' Rod's demanding standards, the Australian model-turned-actress has also put her charms to use in support of charities devoted to protecting gorillas in the Congo. Plus, four words: that "Stacy's Mom" video.

NOT BECAUSE: Following breakup of marriage with Stewart, a topless Hunter was photographed being unpleasantly mauled by Robbie Williams.

Rachel Hunter: "I wonder what the Fountains of Wayne are doing."

4

ACES!

ANNA KOURNIKOVA

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Enrique Iglesias (2002–present)

HOT BECAUSE: A blonde bad girl amid white visors and polite umps, this Muscovite has men nationwide turning off NASCAR to watch her, uh, serve. She doesn't mind sticking out from the Wimbledon set: She's won more sponsorships than trophies, and was recently caught lowering her bikini bottoms by paparazzi.

NOT BECAUSE: She can't win a match to save her life.

3

HARD-ROCK CHEERLEADER

HEATHER LOCKLEAR

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: Tommy Lee (1986–1993), Richie Sambora (Bon Jovi; 1994–present)

HOT BECAUSE: A true enigma, Heather's looks must surely hide depths that are sufficiently enticing to have kept Tommy Lee on a very short leash indeed. Also reputed to have strongly advised husband Sambora to abandon his unsightly trademark Rachel cut.

NOT BECAUSE: After *T.J. Hooker*, *Dynasty* and *Melrose Place*, something of a trailer-park pin-up.

2

SURFER GIRL

CAMERON DIAZ

SIGNIFICANT OTHER: Justin Timberlake (2003–present)

HOT BECAUSE: The Farrah Fawcett for the Teeth-Whitener Generation needs little excuse—either in movies or on vacation—to energetically prance about wearing nothing but undies or tiny two-piece swimsuits ... and a gigantic, perpetual grin.

NOT BECAUSE: She hasn't seemed so wholesome lately—assaulting paparazzi and calling model Lucy Clarkson a "bitch" for saying she had been intimate with Justin.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ANTHONY MANDLER/CORBIS OUTLINE; FLYNET PICTURES; CORBIS; ABACA PRESS

THE HOTTEST GALPAL EVER!

1

LUST FOR LIFEGUARD!

PAMELA ANDERSON

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS: Bret Michaels (Poison; 1993–1994); Tommy Lee (1995–1999); Kid Rock (2001–2003)

HOT BECAUSE: Pam is at the top of a very short list of girls who are always going to be more famous than whomever they date. There is little in the way of joy, heartbreak and tabloid melodrama that the buxom Canadian hasn't sampled at the sharp end of the L.A. rock scene, and she just keeps spoiling for more. An irrepressible legend.

NOT BECAUSE: Introduce a camcorder into the bedroom at your own risk!

And that's how Pamela Anderson started the great roller-rink riot of 1993.

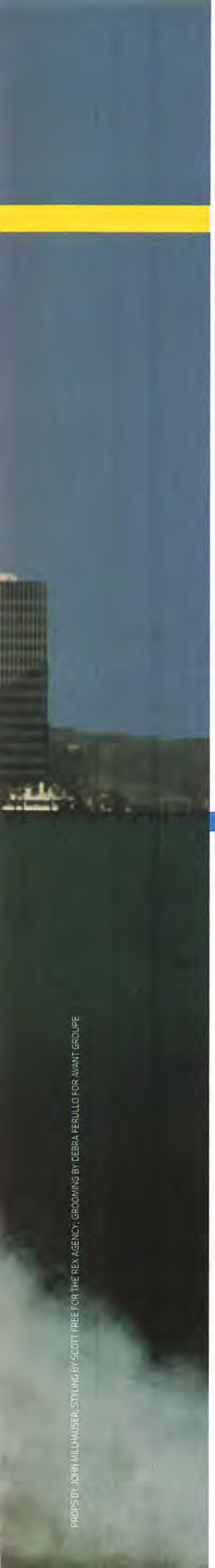
My Music

OUR FAVORITE STARS' FAVORITE RECORDS

"THERE WAS ASS TO BE HAD."

NEIL PATRICK HARRIS ON HIS DAYS AS DR. DOOGIE, RESEARCHING *HAROLD AND KUMAR*'S ECSTASY SCENE AND MAKING CLAY AIKEN DISAPPEAR.

BY CLARK COLLIS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN STEPHENS



PROPS BY JOHN MILLHAUSER; STYLING BY SCOTT FREE FOR THE REX AGENCY; GROOMING BY DEBRA PERULLO FOR AVANT GROUPE

THE ALBUM THAT
DOOGIE WOULDN'T LIKE

PROPELLERHEADS
DECKSANDDRUMS ANDROCKANDROLL
DREAMWORKS, 1998
I don't even know where I first heard this album, but I was entranced by it. It makes me feel like I'm in a James Bond movie. I listen to it a lot when I'm driving. It's hard to imagine Doogie Howser listening to the Propellerheads. He'd probably be a pretentious, Philip Glass-y kind of guy. He'd have had a major meltdown, a midlife crisis at 26. He'd be a heroin junkie.

THE ALBUM THAT
REMINDS ME OF MEETING FRANK

FRANK SINATRA, DEAN MARTIN, SAMMY DAVIS JR.
SUMMIT: IN CONCERT
ARTANIS, 1999
I sing Rat Pack-y stuff in the shower all the time. I saw Frank at the opening of the MGM Grand. He was so old. He had big monitors with all the lyrics, and the monitor went out at one point. It was, like, "Start spreading the … What's happening?" But I got to go back and meet him. It was like meeting the Godfather: You just hope that he doesn't dislike you, because a hit will be taken out.

THE ALBUM THAT
MAKES ME WANT TO BE A SINGER

JASON MRAZ
WAITING FOR MY ROCKET TO COME
ELEKTRA, 2002
I met him at a barbecue before anyone knew who he was. His voice is just such a masterful gift. He has great vocal control. He's so smooth. He's the kind of person I'd like to emulate as a singer. But I watched Jennifer Love Hewitt's music career and I realized that I should probably not follow suit. As much as the Japanese might enjoy my album, I'll leave that to the Hasselhoffs of the world.

THE ALBUM THAT
REMINDS ME I CAN'T DANCE

FATBOY SLIM
BETTER LIVING THROUGH CHEMISTRY
ASTRALWERKS, 1996
Just when you start to get bored with what Norman Cook is doing, he'll throw in a whole other bridge or something. I think that electronica is intellectually pretty clever and he's my favorite. But I don't go out and dance, ever. It's just not in me—I couldn't *be* whiter. I prefer poker. The secret to being a good poker player is intimidation. On that *Celebrity Poker* show, I made Shannon Elizabeth cry. I felt terrible. Well, not *that* terrible ….

THE ALBUM THAT
MAKES ME THINK ABOUT DRUGS

BASEMENT JAXX
KISH KASH
ASTRALWERKS, 2003
The beats are great. It's my gym CD. I was listening to this when I made *Harold and Kumar*. How was I so convincing as someone on Ecstasy? I've done that before, but strictly as research for the part. But I was stone-cold sober when I was filming the scenes, I'll have you know! I'm not going to comment on whether I really had "every piece of ass" on *Doogie Howser*. But there was a lot of ass to be had—that would be a Herculean task.

THE ALBUM THAT
REMINDS ME OF PUPPET SEX

AVENUE Q
ORIGINAL BROADWAY CAST
RCA, 2003
I've got to throw a little musical theater in there, and this is hilarious. It's a Broadway show starring puppets with songs called "It Sucks to Be Me" and "You Can Be As Loud As the Hell You Want (When You're Makin' Love)." It's like *Sesame Street* songs, but with darker material. There's lots of graphic sex as well. I think the Ernie outs the Bert. Gary Coleman is in the show, played by a woman. It's just funny.

THE ALBUM THAT
I PLAY AT PARTIES

SCAPEGOAT WAX
SWAX
HOLLYWOOD, 2002
This is one of my best friends—Marty James. There's some rapping, a lot of samples. I'm kind of pimping him because he's my friend, but it's also a really strong album. It's the kind of music I'll play in my house when friends are over. I'm a pretty good party host. Most of my friends are actor couples. But there's no swinging. My friends just had a baby, so now that there's a tot in the mix, it would be … awkward.

THE ALBUM THAT
TOPS THE WHITE STRIPES

MAROON 5
SONGS ABOUT JANE
OCTONE/J RECORDS, 2002
They're cool. I saw them on *SNL* and they performed well. That's the litmus test, I think, to see if you're Ashlee Simpson or not. Out of the new rock groups they would be my favorite. I don't like the White Stripes. It's all kind of the same every time. I'm not up on my Stones or Beatles. Although I did have a car called Mick Jaguar. The chicks loved him. But his hips started going out. Now I have a Prius. Judas Prius.

THE ALBUM THAT
MAKES ME CRY—WITH LAUGHTER!

DANE COOK
HARMFUL IF SWALLOWED
COMEDY CENTRAL, 2003
The most hilarious stand-up CD I've ever heard. He's very frenetic and goes off about Speak & Spell and the Kool-Aid man and working at Burger King. I don't have the sense of security to do stand-up. But I do magic and help design illusions for friends. I love seeing live magic. Sawing up a woman into six pieces is pretty impressive. Well, of course, it's easy to saw up a woman. It's hard to put her back.

THE ALBUM THAT
I CAN'T STAND

CLAY AIKEN
MERRY CHRISTMAS WITH LOVE
RCA, 2004
I had such high expectations for it. He's worked so hard to get where he is. He's really worked in the musical trenches. What sounds sarcastic is actually kind of accurate. A Christmas album lends itself to somebody that has a nice, Barry Manilow-y kind of voice. So I was really crossing my fingers that he'd hit "O Holy Night" out of the park. And he didn't even say the right words. I sent it to my parents. They think he's *adorable*.

JACKET AND PANTS BY **DIESEL**

Dear Superstar

YOU SEND QUESTIONS, WE GET ANSWERS. WHO LOVES YA, BABY?

50 CENT

THE THUG-RAP KING ISN'T THAT INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT WHO KILLED HIS MOM OR SHOWING YOU HIS "LOLLIPOP." BUT 50 CENT WILL PLAY YOUR BAR MITZVAH (FOR $250,000!).

BY JONAH WEINER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GUZMAN

50 CENT DOESN'T look so tough. When the 28-year-old rapper arrives at our Manhattan photo studio and beelines for the catering table, *Blender* does a double-take to make sure the man carefully selecting hors d'oeuvres is really him. His He-Man build is hidden beneath the soft folds of a G-Unit sweatshirt, he stands about 30 feet shorter than we'd expect of a bullet-riddled ex-convict and he's beaming a smile worthy of Vanna White.

It's Curtis Jackson's signature blend of warmth and wickedness that helped 2003's *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* post the highest first-week sales recorded for any debuting artist. He's said he personally grossed $40 million that year, and with a clothing line, sneaker, label, book, sports drink, videogame and Hollywood biopic all either out or in the works, $40 million is likely chump change by now. That blend is also the key to his second album, *The Massacre*, which has already spawned "Candy Shop," the scariest-sounding hit to ever build an oral-sex metaphor around lollipops.

Dipping into a bowl of hummus, we remind him that when we interviewed him in June 2003, he confessed he'd never had sex on a beach.

He chuckles, "Trust me, homey. A lot has happened since then."

Please, go on ....

DOES THE BULLET SHARD IN YOUR TONGUE MAKE IT HARD TO GET ON AIRPLANES?

KINGCRUMPS99, PHOENIX

No, it doesn't go off. It's only a fragment. Sometimes, though, it tastes like I've got a lemon in my mouth. My taste buds be buggin' out!

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE TATTOOS, AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

HULK4HELL, BELLINGHAM, WA

On my left forearm I got one that says "God understands me." In my position, you gonna be misinterpreted. That's why I put it there. On my right bicep is my son's name, Marquise, written in an axe. He's 8. The axe is 'cause I'm a warrior. I don't want him to be one, though. The next one's my whole back. It's kinda like a mural. It's a huge "50." Across the top it says "Southside," for Southside Jamaica, Queens. Then it says "Cold World." I'm a product of that environment.

BULLETPROOF VESTS ARE *SOOO* 2003. WHAT'S YOUR NEW LOOK GONNA BE?

MSLIGHTNIN, HAINES CITY, FL

Wow. 2003. I didn't know it was a look; I thought it was for protection. I don't put a lot of thought into it. But you'll see my new style; it's gonna be G-Unit apparel. →

STYLING BY TIFFANY HASBOURNE FOR BRAT PRODUCTIONS; GROOMING BY LITE THE BARBER

HAT AND SWEATSHIRT BY **G-UNIT CLOTHING**

50 Cent: "And I'm saying you *do* want to change your wireless service."

HOW MUCH MONEY WAS IN YOUR BANK ACCOUNT WHEN EMINEM FIRST CALLED YOU IN 2001?
HIGSLYSHIRE, STATE COLLEGE, PA

$4,000. I'd signed a publishing deal with Columbia on my hospital bed, three days after I had the operation, for $100,000. After I did that, they found that I'd been shot nine times, and they dropped me. While I was rehabilitating myself, I kinda ran through that money. The $65,000 advance was gone, so I went back to selling drugs. That's the only way I learned to provide for myself outside of music.

MY SON'S BAR MITZVAH IS COMING UP IN APRIL. WHAT WOULD IT TAKE FOR YOU TO COME AND SING "GO, GO, GO, IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY"?
SIMON.KNS, GARDEN CITY, NY

My bar mitzvah rate is $250,000. That's a discount. Ha ha! Hell, I'll do a whole hour and thirty minutes. There'll probably be a lot of old people, but they'll shake it. They gon' get busy.

WILL THERE BE SEX SCENES IN YOUR MOVIE, AND WOULD YOU SHOW YOUR LOLLIPOP ON SCREEN?
BUTTACUP69, ATLANTA

There will be sex scenes, but you ain't seein' no lollipops unless you get the tapes that's in my bedroom closet. We start shooting in April. It's loosely based on my life, and I'm working with Jim Sheridan, a great filmmaker. Terry Winter from *The Sopranos* wrote the screenplay.

WHAT WAS THE WEIRDEST THING YOU FOUND WHEN YOU BOUGHT MIKE TYSON'S MANSION?
NEVA_LET_U_DOWN, FORT RILEY, KS

There wasn't nothing weird; that house was beautiful. It's 65,000 square feet. A window is broke on the door, from when Mike locked himself out and punched it. There's gold-plated stuff all over the house: real gold! At first I was gonna change it, then they told me it was gold. I said, "Okay, you can leave it." Thanks, Mike! Martha Stewart lives nearby. When she come home, we gon' kick it.

YOU STARTED DEALING DRUGS AT AGE 12. WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE?
LUNGMUNCHER, COLUMBIA, SC

I was only able to hustle from 3 to 6, the afterschool program hours—when I went back into the house I had to be my grandmother's child. The street teaches you to be as aggressive as you have to be, and my grandmother taught me to be a gentleman, cordial. I've utilized both behaviors in business. There's the guy on the corner that enjoys being there—he'll be there until he dies or ends up in jail. Then there's the guy with the entrepreneur's spirit.

HOW DID YOU SPEND LAST CHRISTMAS?
K.CAROTHERS, EVANSTON, IL

I was at my grandmother's. It was me, relatives and my son. I don't spend as much time with him as I'd like. I got him a laptop, a T-Mobile, he wants all the high-tech gadgets. He asked me, "I'm doing good in school, do you think I can get a book bag?" I said, "Yeah." He said "Okay, I'll take the Gucci one, like Kanye West." I got it for him—I'd already said "yes." He's smart.

G-Unit *hate* waiting around for the cable guy: 50 Cent, Tony Yayo and Lloyd Banks.

Eminem, 50 and Dre in October 2004. →

HAVE YOU EVER TRIED TO FIND OUT WHO KILLED YOUR MOTHER?
LOLA87687, WILMINGTON, DE

Nah. I'm not a special investigator. It doesn't burn inside me. My mom sold drugs. She had me when she was 15. Back then, teenage pregnancy wasn't as common. So that's how she decided she was gonna take care of me—she substituted finances for time. In that life, you expect to die or go to jail.

YOU'VE TOURED THE WORLD. ARE THERE ANY GOOD RAPPERS OUTSIDE OF THE U.S.?
JAD_ENGLISH, SEDALIA, MO

There's a lot in Nigeria. They're rapping in another language and it's exciting to hear them have similar cadences, 'cause that's difficult. You try to teach *me* small phrases in another language, it's hard. I performed there in front of 100,000 people—probably my biggest show to date. There were local artists on the bill, and I actually had a little friction from them: Imagine if you're Nigerian and you're watching 100,000 people respond to me in a way they don't respond to you.

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU DID YOUR OWN LAUNDRY?
KILLASETH, KNOXVILLE, MD

Never. My grandmother used to do it for me; now I have other people to do it for me.

HOW MUCH WOULD IT COST ME TO HAVE MY GYM TEACHER KILLED?
BFERRETTI, NEWARK, NJ

$5,000. Where I'm from, the price of life is cheap. His gym teacher ain't gonna make no big headlines, so that'd be cheap.

DO YOU REGRET DISSING ANY FAMOUS RAPPERS ON YOUR DEBUT SINGLE, "HOW TO ROB"?
THISREALTALK, NEW ORLEANS

Nope. That was done in a humorous way—I made the record as broad as possible. Missy done put that hot dog down, too, and she look good now! See? Told you.

WHO CRACKS THE WHIP MORE IN THE STUDIO, EMINEM OR DR. DRE?
HARRIS_JACKSON_2, DEARBORN, MI

Neither one is tough on me, but they're different. Em is the rapper's rapper, listening

DEAR SUPERSTAR

Have a question to ask a superstar? Mail or e-mail it to us, and we'll put the best to the world's greatest stars. Check out Blender.com for upcoming interviews.

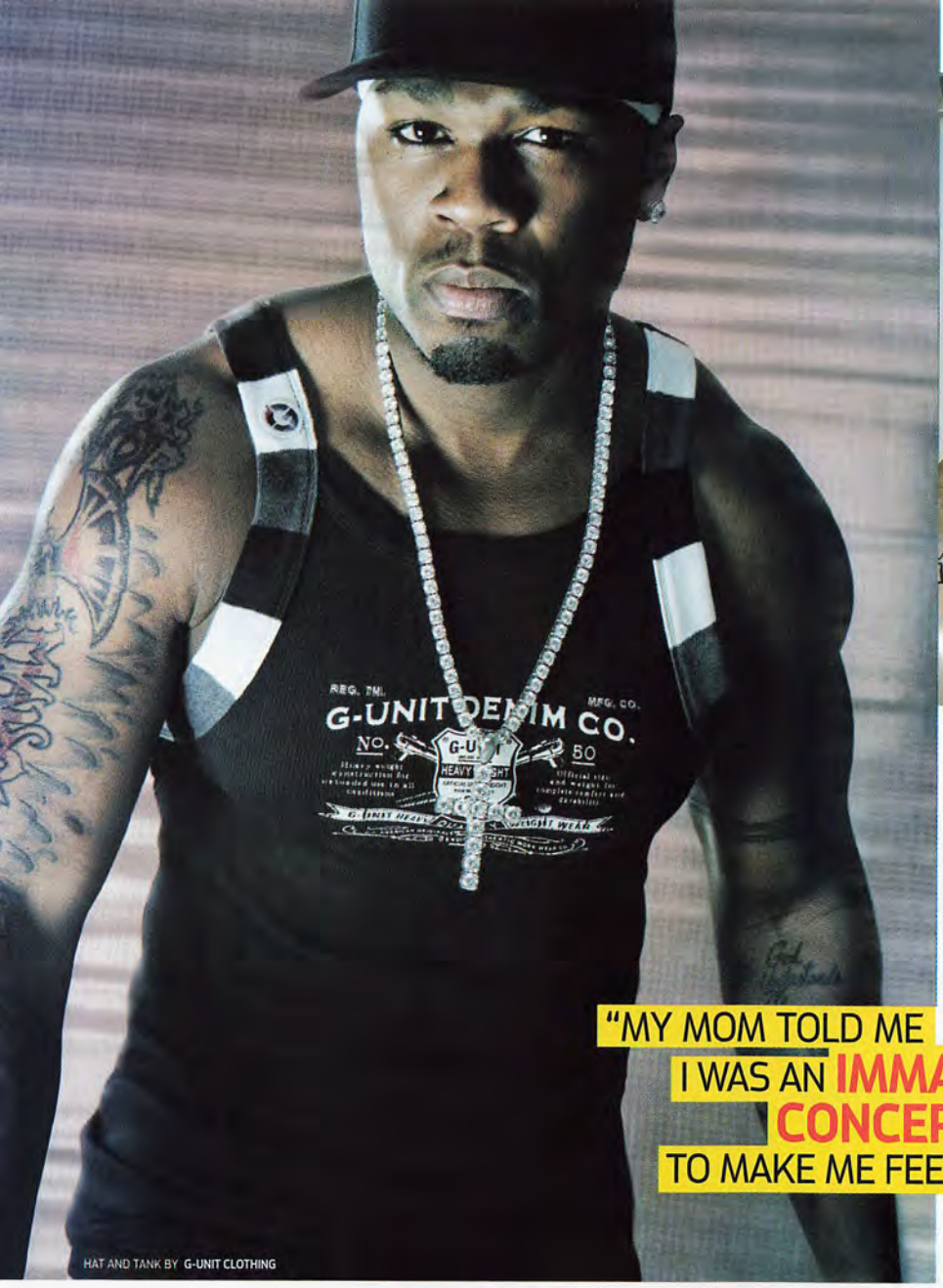
Mail: Dear Superstar, *Blender*, 1040 Sixth Avenue, 22nd floor, New York, NY 10018
E-mail: superstar@blender.com

SPECIAL PROMOTION

Now there's a new way to get in touch with the stars. **TEXT YOUR QUESTIONS TO 2222** using your Cingular Wireless phone and be automatically registered to have the names of upcoming interviewees zapped to your phone, courtesy of Cingular.

cingular

FROM TOP: CHARLES LANGELLA/CORBIS OUTLINE; JOY E. SCHELLER/LFI



HAT AND TANK BY G-UNIT CLOTHING

DAN CRONIN/NYP/GLOBE PHOTOS

"MY MOM TOLD ME I WAS AN IMMACULATE CONCEPTION TO MAKE ME FEEL SPECIAL"

50's crib: "Hey, who ran over my zebra?"

to every line, every word. Dre, he'll make a decision based on the marriage between the beats and words. I can accept constructive criticism from them. We have a lot of fun in the studio—play videogames, do my part, come back and play around again.

WHO ARE YOU SCARED OF?
RIPSTICK_2005, FOND DU LAC, WI

Me! I'm scared of my temper. Apart from that, I'm scared of running into someone like me.

HAVE YOU EVER MET YOUR FATHER?
ELZONE, OAKLAND, CA

Nah. I think that's more of a concern to white Americans. They're more concerned about having your mother and father at the same time. It's so common to be in a broken home where I'm from. If I met him, I'd probably say, "What's going on?" My mom told me I was an immaculate conception, to make me feel special. I don't have no father. Why's a father necessary? To help you become a man. And I'm a man.

HOW MANY BODYGUARDS ARE WITH YOU RIGHT NOW?
VICIOUS_VICTLES, DURANT, OK

One. That's low for me. I don't like everybody around me like that. The biggest security detail I've rolled with was about 10. That's when you had me, Lloyd Banks and Young Buck together.

HOW MUCH DID IT COST TO BULLETPROOF YOUR SUV?
JEREMIAD_008, STORM LAKE, IA

I have two of them, one in New York, one in L.A., and it was about 100 grand each. I'm actually disappointed, though: Nobody's shot me. I spent a lot of money on that shit!

WHAT WILL IT TAKE FOR 50 CENT TO SETTLE DOWN?
BOTTOMZUP, LANCASTER, OH

Mrs. Curtis Jackson is someone who has ambition, her own goals. It can't just be about me. I want somebody that, when they start speaking, I need to stop and listen, 'cause they know things I don't know. Plus, she has to be beautiful. Right now, I'm not a good person to try and settle down with. I'd need someone who can adjust to me not being around.

DID YOU EVER REPAY YOUR GRANDPARENTS FOR TAKING CARE OF YOU AS A KID?
UNDERWHERE, WASHINGTON, DC

Absolutely. I moved them to a new house, bought both of them new cars. But you can't repay them in finances. I love them dearly. Maybe I'll repay them when they become so old that they can't take care of themselves—then I'll take care of them.

WHY SHOULD I DRINK 50 CENT VITAMIN WATER?
HERRINGBONE, CHICAGO

'Cause it's good for you. Fifty percent of your daily vitamin intake—that's why it's called Formula 50. I didn't wanna support an alcoholic beverage. Energy drinks will have you bouncing off the wall. I didn't wanna involve myself with a project that doesn't reflect my lifestyle. I stay active. Don't be surprised if I put out a multivitamin at GNC.

WHICH OF THE BULLETS HURT THE MOST?
S_HAMILTON, OAK BLUFFS, MA

My hip. It hit in the middle of my leg and fractured my hip. That's your major bone! When that hurts, shit, you can't sit straight, you can't do nothing. Going to the bathroom becomes a real chore, absolutely.

IF YOU LOST IT ALL TOMORROW, WHAT WOULD BE THE SINGLE HARDEST LUXURY TO GIVE UP?
KASPAR6400, VICKSBURG, MS

My bedroom set. That was made for me—I'll carry it under my arms if I have to!

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO ON A FIRST DATE?
JOEBRO, CALLAWAY, NE

Fuck and watch TV. [BLENDER]

The Greatest Songs Ever

BLENDER EXPLORES THE FINEST TUNES IN HISTORY

ICE CUBE

"It Was a Good Day"

HOW DID ICE CUBE GO FROM PARENTAL-ADVISORY POSTER BOY TO FAMILY-FRIENDLY MOVIE STAR? BY SHOWING THE WORLD HIS CUDDLY SIDE.

BY MICHAEL ODELL

DOROTHY LOW

BY 1992, ICE CUBE was the toast of American sticker manufacturers. As a member of N.W.A, whose 1989 release "Fuck tha Police" had provoked an FBI censure, he was already responsible for keeping the parental-advisory label industry working overtime. After his departure from the group later in 1989, his solo albums *Amerikkka's Most Wanted* and *Death Certificate* established him as a scourge of white America and rap's most cogent racial commentator.

Racial issues in America came to a boil in 1992 with the outbreak of the L.A. riots. In the charged atmosphere of that time, people looked to Ice Cube's third solo album, *The Predator*, released in the fall, for an expression of the outrage many were feeling. Instead they got something they didn't expect: the chilled-out, feel-good vibe of "It Was a Good Day."

Cruising gangbangers would have been forgiven for unloading a clip into the car stereo when they first heard the song's jangly guitar intro. But if they stuck with it they would have noticed it was still a finely observed vignette of life in the 'hood. But for once, safety catches are on, cops in their patrol cars are looking the other way and homies are playing basketball.

"The inspiration was my life at the time," says Ice Cube, né O'Shea Jackson. "I was at the top of the rap game. It was the summer of '92 and I was in a hotel room, really in a state of euphoria. I had all the money I had dreamed of. I was in a good frame of mind. And I remember thinking, 'Okay, there's been the riots, people know I will deal with that. That's a given. But I rap all this gangsta stuff—what about all the good days I had?'"

When Ice Cube returned to Los Angeles, he recorded a demo of the song at his home studio. Sessions for *The Predator* had been booked at Echo Sound in Glendale, and DJ Pooh and Cypress Hill's DJ Muggs, among others, had been slated to produce.

"It Was a Good Day" was one of the first ideas for the album sessions. Ice Cube turned up at the studio with a copy of the Isley Brothers' soulful "Footsteps in the Dark." "I grew up listening to the Isleys." he says. "There were some good feelings associated right there. But I'm not claiming originality. I'd heard that track sampled before, on 'Can I Kill It?' by Compton's Most Wanted, but they only used a small section for a loop. I listened to the track and the whole story came to me. I thought, 'It's all here. Let's just use the whole eight bars.'"

"To be honest, there wasn't a hell of a lot for me to do to it," remembers Pooh. "I enhanced the Isleys' music with bass and vocals to give it even more of an easy-listening vibe. There wasn't the usual dense feeling to the music and I wondered what he would do with it. Then Cube just went into the booth with this whole story mapped out."

"It Was a Good Day" presented the daily itinerary not of a fictional gangbanger but of Ice Cube himself. He gets up and his mom serves breakfast with "no hog"—a nod to the Nation of Islam, which he supported without being a full member. "I was learning a lot about Islam, the body, and pork being a nasty thing back then," explains Ice Cube. "The Nation of Islam knew that hardcore rap had the attention, the minds of young black men like at no other time. I had spoken with Minister Farrakhan and shown an interest in what they were trying to achieve. I never signed up fully. But I definitely saw eye to eye with them on pork."

VITAL STATISTICS

SONG "It Was a Good Day"
PERFORMER Ice Cube
LABEL Priority
PRODUCER DJ Pooh
RELEASED March 1993
HIGHEST CHART POSITION 15
WEEKS ON CHART 20

As he continues his balmy progress through South Central L.A., Ice Cube is grateful that lurking gangbangers leave him alone and that when he jumps a stoplight, cops are looking the other way. He plays basketball, gambles, has sex, smokes weed, gets drunk and downs a burger—but the line "Today I didn't even have to use my AK" was an injection of fantasy. "No, using an AK wasn't part of my everyday life," says Ice Cube. "But I was near enough to that world to write about it."

The authenticity of Ice Cube's filmic narration is boosted further by the cameos from real people. Midway through the song, he drops by Short Dog's house to watch *Yo! MTV Raps*. In 1992, Short Dog was a member of Ice Cube's protégés Da Lench Mob; these days he's a full member of the Nation of Islam.

Then there's the story's love interest. After getting into his lowrider and avoiding any carjackers, Ice Cube gets a beep from Kim, who, we are informed, "can fuck all night." Whatever became of her? "She's my wife," says Cube. "She never had a problem with the lyrics. In fact, she's a big fan of that song."

As "It Was a Good Day" draws to a close, Ice Cube ditches realism for comic fantasy. In the sky he spots the Goodyear blimp flashing the message ICE CUBE'S A PIMP. And then we're back down to the South Central turf with a bump. The song's mellow mood, just like any peaceful interlude in the 'hood, cannot last forever. "Stop this shit/What the fuck am I thinking?" he asks Pooh, distancing himself from the record.

"That was spontaneous. 'It Was a Good Day' was a risk, and I wanted to show that I was aware it was different," he explains. "There was a risk that the fans would be like, 'Yo, these cats gone soft,' but I had to address it in a way that showed I knew what I was doing."

Cypress Hill's DJ Muggs produced the ultraviolent "Now I Gotta Wet'cha" on *The Predator*. He, too, had reservations when he dropped by to hear what Cube and Pooh had been working on. "I was typical of his core audience," says Muggs. "I thought Cube was the greatest rapper in the world and I loved his aggressive style. When I first heard 'It Was a Good Day,' it didn't immediately work for me. It had no attack and it kinda needed you to stand still and listen to a story. But I got it after a few listens. And after that record, the world of rap was broader. The characters and scenarios were deeper."

Upon its release, *The Predator* reached No. 1 on the pop and R&B album charts. Released as a single in March of 1993, "It Was a Good Day" reached No. 15 in April and left a clear legacy.

Says Ice Cube: "When I heard Biggie use another Isleys track, "Between the Sheets," on "Big Poppa," I was like, 'Hmm, maybe I changed something.' 'It Was a Good Day' showed there's more than one way to be real. And more than one aspect to life in the 'hood." [BLENDER]

WHO'S WHO

DJ MUGGS 37
Member of pot-centric rap group Cypress Hill, producer on *The Predator* and on House of Pain's megahit "Jump Around."

ICE CUBE 35
N.W.A alumnus and self-styled "nigga ya love to hate" who has evolved into film mogul with *Barbershop* franchise and family flick *Are We There Yet?*

DJ POOH 37
DJ and producer who has worked with LL Cool J and Tupac. Currently pursuing screenwriting; wrote for comedies such as *Friday* and *The Wash*.

FROM TOP: MR. SNUGGLES; DEREK RIDGERS/LFI

Ask Blender

SOLVING POP CONUNDRUMS SINCE 2001

WHO'S THE WORLD'S FASTEST RAPPER?

NICHOLAS POLUHOFF, GARDEN CITY, NY

Kanye West's cohort Twista made the *Guinness Book of World Records* in 1992, when he was still called Tung Twista, for spitting 598 syllables in one minute. But the "Slow Jamz" rapper's record was broken in 1992 by fellow Chicago hip-hopper Rebel XD (Seandale Price), who still holds the record today. In June 1998 he beat his own record by rapping a staggering 683 syllables in 54.501 seconds. (The judges played the tape extremely slooooowly to ensure that each word was properly enunciated.) But outside the pages of *Guinness*, Rebel XD hasn't come close to achieving Twista-level success, and even his title may be threatened: Twista recently promised, "pretty soon you're going to see me … breaking the record."

IS GREEN DAY'S NAME A REFERENCE TO SMOKING POT?

CHARLES CATLING, LAS CRUCES, NM

Most definitely. Green Day frontman Billie Joe Armstrong heard the phrase from friends while living in the basement of a Berkeley university building, and was inspired to write the song "Green Day"—an ode to wasting time smoking grass (it appeared on their 1990 debut album, *39/Smooth*). Eventually he decided it was an improvement on Sweet Children, the band's earlier name.

WHO'S THE MARRIED WOMAN THAT LOU REED SANG ABOUT IN THE VELVET UNDERGROUND SONG "PALE BLUE EYES"?

MOLLY MORRIS, MILL VALLEY, CA

She is Shelley Albin, Reed's old girlfriend from Syracuse, N.Y., with whom he had resumed a passionate affair—despite her recent marriage to someone else. The Velvet Underground singer's tortured pleas for his old flame to leave her husband inspired numerous songs written around 1968, including "I Can't Stand It" (which contains the line "If Shelley would just come back"). She was also the inspiration for his famous "… Says" cycle; "Caroline Says," eventually released on Reed's 1973 solo album *Berlin*, was originally called "Shelley Says."

Man, those are some ugly cheerleaders.

Malcolm McLaren

"MCLAREN'S PLAN WAS FOR THE BAND TO PLAY '50S-STYLE ROCK & ROLL."

I SEEM TO RECALL READING SOMEWHERE THAT THE RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS WERE ONCE MANAGED BY MALCOLM MCLAREN. TRUE OR FALSE?

LOREN DYSON, WALNUT CREEK, CA

False, although the notorious Sex Pistols svengali was penciled in to produce the band's 1987 album, *The Uplift Mofo Party Plan*. The band, huge fans of McLaren's other protégés Bow Wow Wow, were excited about the idea. But from the moment McLaren pulled up to EMI's Hollywood offices in a Rolls-Royce wearing judicial white robes, nothing quite gelled.

McLaren's plan was for the band to play stripped-down, '50s-style rock & roll. He declared that lead singer Antony Kiedis should be the band's only star, with the other members relegated to background roles. The match-up was swiftly nixed, but McLaren's pep talk about down-home rock-blues values did inspire the lyrics to the *Uplift* track "Backwoods."

YOUR QUESTIONS

***Ask Blender**, 1040 Sixth Avenue, 22nd floor, New York, NY 10018*
***E-mail:** askblender@blender.com*
Please include your first and last name, your hometown and your state or province.

WHO REALLY DISCOVERED THE JACKSON 5—DIANA ROSS OR GLADYS KNIGHT?

J.P. TAJIMA, BOULDER

The Motown machine always claimed Diana Ross first tipped off Berry Gordy—hence their debut album's title, *Diana Ross Presents the Jackson 5*. But the story that she saw the youngsters perform at a fundraising event for the mayor of Gary, Indiana, the Jacksons' hometown, was a crock—the Supremes were recording in an L.A. studio at the time.

The Ross-related hype was intended to give them a leg up. In fact, Gladys Knight had called Gordy in 1968, after the group had supported her and the Pips at one of their Chicago dates. But the label boss ignored her advice and moved on them only after hearing another recommendation, later that year, from a lesser-known Motown artist, Bobby Taylor (of Bobby Taylor and the Vancouvers non-fame). But *Bobby Taylor Presents …* probably wouldn't have had the same impact. [BLENDER]

Nobody does "I'm a Little Teapot" like Diana Ross.

FROM TOP: EBET ROBERTS; PHILLIP GOSTELOW/CAMERA PRESS/RETNA LTD.; UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD/CORBIS

©2005 UNILEVER
His
Hers
Her Sister's
Her Roommate's
How Dirty Boys Get Clean.
NEW AXE SHOWER GEL
AXE
TOUCH

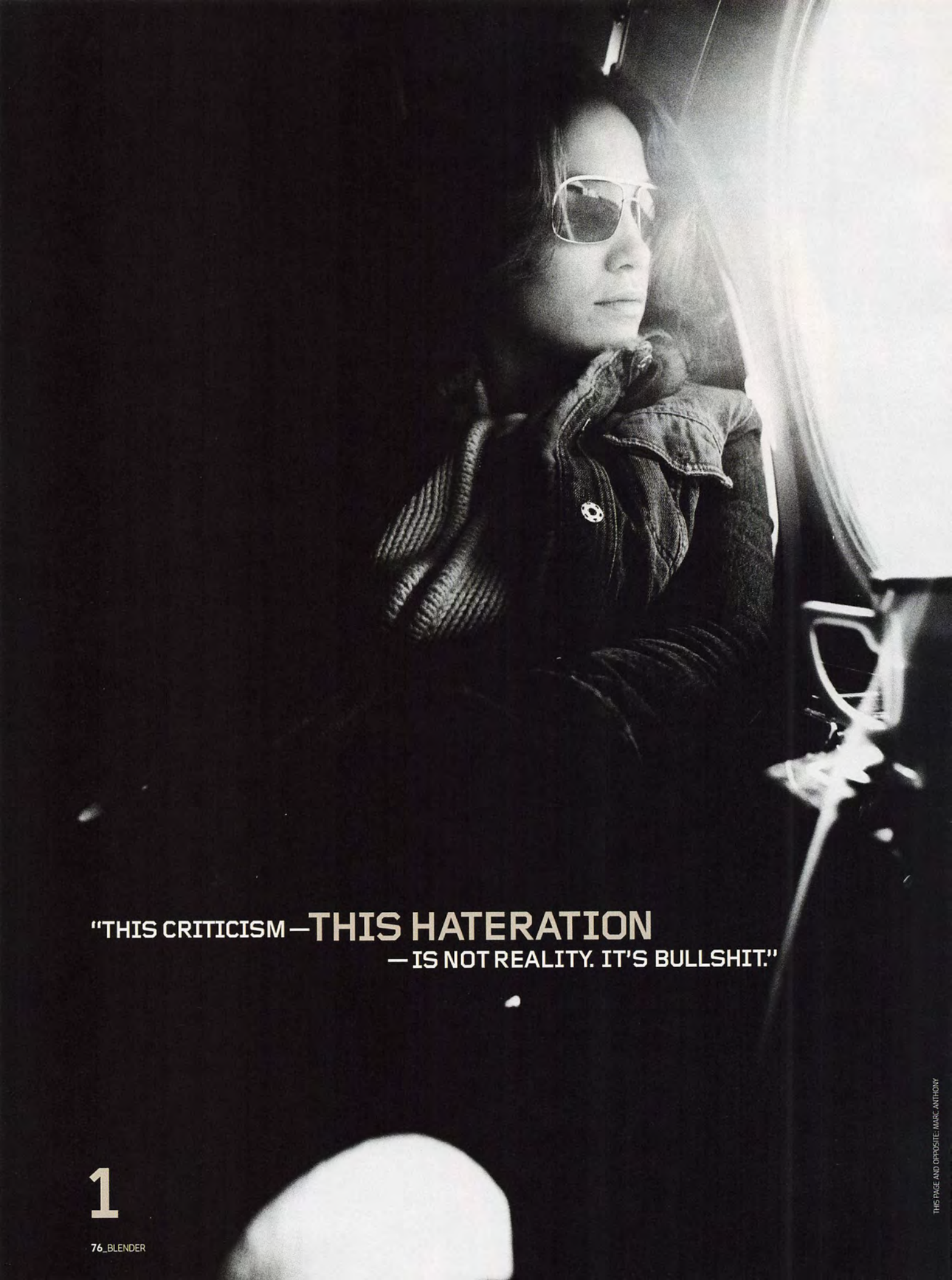
BY BRIAN RAFTERY

PHOTOGRAPHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR BLENDER BY MARC ANTHONY

THE GLAMOROUS LIFE

GIGLI WHAT? BEN WHO? FOLLOWING A STRING OF VERY PUBLIC FLOPS, **JENNIFER LOPEZ** ("DON'T CALL ME J. LO!") HAS ROARED BACK WITH A NEW ALBUM, FILM, MANAGER, CLOTHING LINE, HUSBAND AND ATTITUDE. "I'M NOT A WALKING SOAP OPERA," SHE TELLS *BLENDER*.

SET DESIGN BY: JOHN MILLHAUSER. STYLING BY: BRITT BARDO CRAWFORD. HAIR BY: ORIBE. MAKEUP BY: MATTHEW VAN LEEUWEN FOR AVANT GROUPE. MANICURE BY: APRIL FOREMAN FOR YARNISH/CLOUTIER. STYLIST ASSISTANT: LAUREN TAFURI.



"THIS CRITICISM—THIS HATERATION
—IS NOT REALITY. IT'S BULLSHIT."

1

THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE: MARC ANTHONY

1 En route to Los Angeles (private jet, of course), January 2005. 2 Lopez's glam squad preps the singer for a music-award show in Cannes, France. 3 Marc Anthony snaps the missus, April 2004. 4 Last-minute touch-up prior to April's Costume Institute gala, New York, 2004.

THIS MAY NOT come as a big surprise, but Jennifer Lopez is a damn fine lip-syncer. Sitting in a boxy, charm-free office at her fashion company's Manhattan headquarters, she pouts her lips, coolly narrows her sepia eyes and sharply half-nods along to Sheila E.'s "The Glamorous Life." By the time Ms. E. takes it to the chorus, Lopez is mouthing the words and effortlessly rocking her head up and down, never letting her stare stray from the paperwork in front of her.

With just a few days left to go in New York's twice-annual fashion week, the 35-year-old Lopez is rushing through the music selections for the closing-night show premiering Sweetface, her new apparel line. It's a task that somehow requires no fewer than 13 attendants, including two cameramen, a sound guy, business partner Andy Hilfiger, at least three European DJ experts, a handful of assistants and *Blender*, which is sitting in the corner and trying to tactfully sneak a look at Lopez's famously generous can.

Thankfully, she makes it easy for us, having shown up in a pair of blue jeans so tight they surely require some sort of upper-level Pilates maneuver just to put on. She's smaller than we expected—with the tiny feet of a dancer—and constantly in some sort of nervous motion, tapping her pen or gesticulating with her hands. She's clad in a pea-green military cap and pelt-adorned belt; the whole look is Max Factor meets *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome*, a warm way of saying "Don't fuck with me."

Not surprisingly, Lopez is running the meeting, making her opinions known pleasantly but thoroughly. She's already nixed a snippet of Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Sweet Home Alabama," deeming it too "redneck," but OK'd the use of Marc Anthony's "I Need to Know" (more on that later). "It has to feel like a big concert is about to happen," she says. "We need something that's gonna say, 'This shit is coming right now.' Know what I mean?"

They know. This overcrowded war room's sheer existence is to ensure that everything goes smoothly this week, that there are no breaks in Lopez's couture-covered armor, for she has plenty at stake. Sweetface is supposed to solidify Lopez's reputation as an all-encompassing tastemaker (her previous line, JLO, earned more than $300 million in sales last year). If it fails, not only will she be left with a showroom full of oversized, '70s-style floppy hats but she'll also have to endure a press corps eager to rehash her sketchy past couple of years, when the harmoniously whirring machinations that made Lopez seem nearly indestructible began to hiccup: The movies tanked, the anti-pop consortiums were beginning to sneer at her vocal limitations and Lopez was in danger of becoming an oft-betrothed punch line.

"I wasn't happy with my life," she tells *Blender* after the cadre of attendants has departed. "I didn't like the way I was being portrayed. I'm not a walking soap opera. This criticism—this *hateration*—is not reality. It's bullshit."

It's true: Sometimes even Jennifer Lopez gets sick of Jennifer Lopez.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WHETHER BY FATE, chance or sheer public-relations savvy, Jennifer Lopez tends to find her hyphenate-heavy career meshing together every few years. In 2001 she had the No. 1 album (*J.Lo*) and the No. 1 movie (*The Wedding Planner*) on the same weekend; in 2002, she managed to reiterate for the 5,000th time that she was still just a regular girl from the Bronx, both on record ("Jenny From the Block") and on screen (*Maid in Manhattan*).

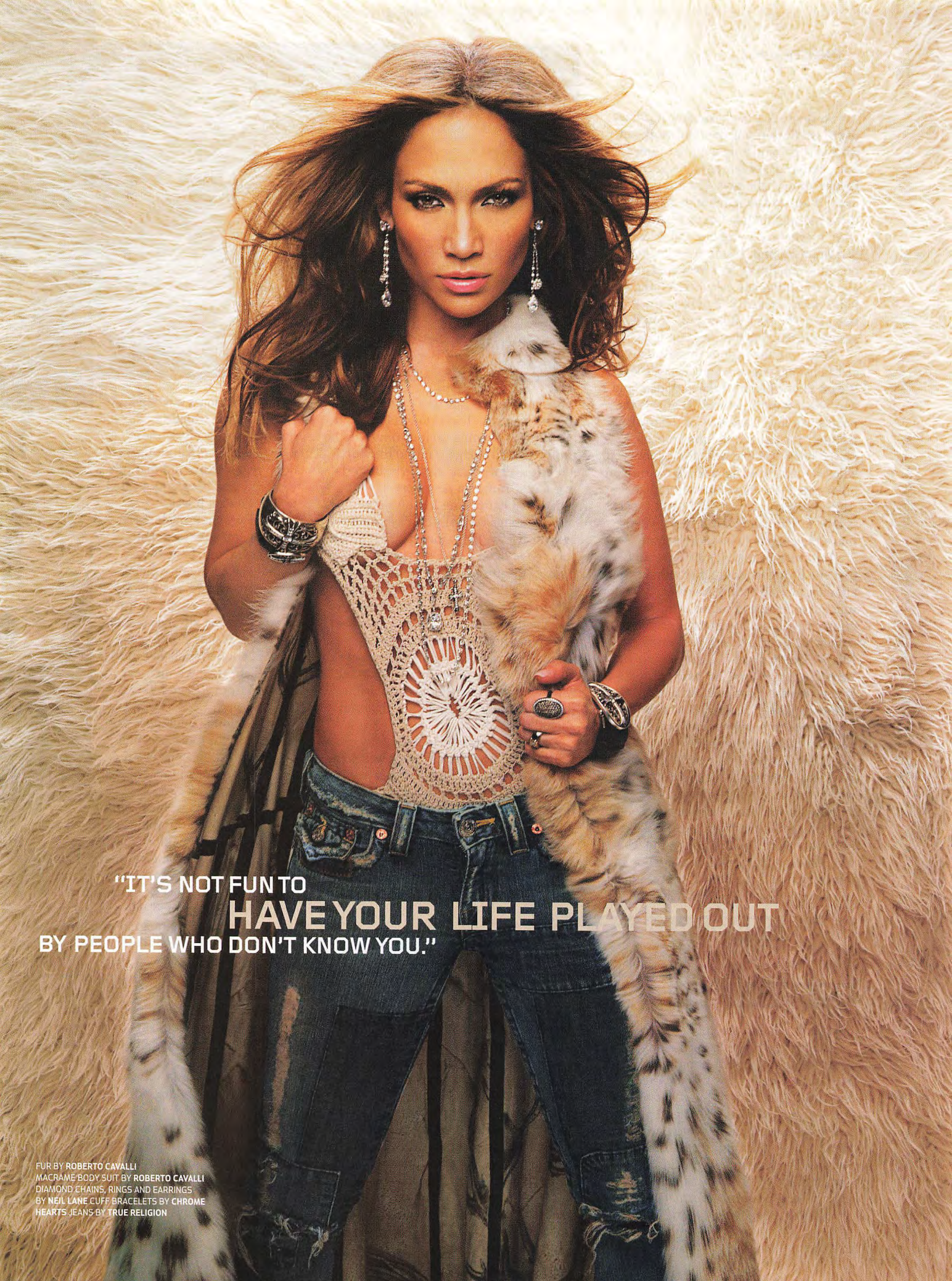
But this year is her most absurdly exhaustive yet, with a tour (her first ever), two albums (*Rebirth* and an as-yet-untitled Spanish-language record), two movies (*Monster-in-Law*, with Jane Fonda, and the long-on-the-shelf Robert Redford drama *An Unfinished Life*) and, as of press time, only one new husband (singer Marc Anthony). Not surprisingly, Lopez's time is short, and interviewing her is like being a contestant on an extremely nice-smelling version of *The $25,000 Pyramid*: Once her answers start to get entangled, you have to move on, and quick. She pre-emptively refuses to talk about Anthony, and when she does speak, many of her responses sound as though they should be on those cheesy quote cards that pop up before a movie starts (e.g., "[Fame is] this roller-coaster ride, and once your head stops spinning and your stomach goes back to where it belongs, you go, 'I made it!'").

It's strange that someone who once flaunted every aspect of her private life so boldly has suddenly turned elusive, but there's a good reason: Sometime in early 2004, Lopez broke down.

"[I was] like, 'Fuck it, I don't want to think about anything anymore,'" she says. "I'd been going so nonstop from my first album to this last album—I did four albums and 10 movies in seven years. It was a flash." ➔

Easy on the eye: Lopez lounges at home, 2004.

THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE: MARC ANTHONY



FUR BY **ROBERTO CAVALLI**
MACRAME BODY SUIT BY **ROBERTO CAVALLI**
DIAMOND CHAINS, RINGS AND EARRINGS BY **NEIL LANE** CUFF BRACELETS BY **CHROME HEARTS** JEANS BY **TRUE RELIGION**

Alongside fellow Bronx native Fat Joe on the video set for "Hold You Down," January 2005.

So she took a half-year sabbatical, trying to get herself together and work out what was going wrong with her career. She spent most of her days doing "not a fuckin' thing," she says. "Nothing. Day to day, I'd get up late, kind of dabble—if there was anything going on business-wise, maybe make a phone call. Mostly I just hung around. It's hard for me to breathe sometimes, so it was kind of about breathing and relaxing, letting my hair follicles relax." She pulls at the knots tied up at the back of her cap. "You don't realize there's this tightness up here."

Watching the legions of speculative airheads clucking on about Lopez's love life on E! or VH1, it's easy to understand why she'd want to retreat. "It affects the people you love," she says of the trash-talking. "It's not fun to have your life played out by people who don't know you, who are just guessing, and then a million other people in the world taking that as truth. It doesn't feel good. I don't expect people to sympathize. But that's why I made the change to be more private."

But truth be told, it's hard not to feel that she brought a lot of this onto herself; after all, no one put an *Access Hollywood* mic to her head and forced her to show off her new beaus (a list that includes, somewhat in order, first husband Ojani Noa, P. Diddy, second husband Cris Judd, Ben Affleck and now Anthony) or to do a kitchen-set sit-down with Affleck on *Primetime Live*. But she claims to be mostly oblivious to just how omnipresent she's been for the past two years.

"I think I just didn't care," she says of her breathless media blitz. "I didn't try to put myself out there; I was just being myself and working. I am very outgoing. I don't like to be confined. I don't like to be in my house 100 hours a day. And what you realize is that, if you're gonna be in this business, there's some concessions you have to make. I made concessions, but it took some maturing."

"MARC ALWAYS HAD A REAL BELIEF IN ME AS A SINGER."

One of the biggest concessions has been secluding herself, hoping to define her public persona less through her romances and more through her résumé. "Lately, she and Marc are [more] protective of their personal life, because of what they both went through," says Cory Rooney, her longtime friend and songwriting partner. "They put a shield around their personal information."

Rebirth collaborator Fat Joe puts it more succinctly: "She don't go out much," he says. "I tried to gas her a couple of times to come up to Jimmy's in the Bronx. [But if] she goes out to the club, it'll be on all the tabloids the next morning, a new rumor, a new story. It's unfortunate. It's hard being Jennifer Lopez."

Her songs certainly don't make it seem that way. Ever since her first album, 1999's *On the 6*, Lopez's lyrics have been a barely disguised update of her own glamorous life, always linking her personality to her products, no matter how private the details may be. Even if you lived in a spider-hole for three months, it would be hard not to know what train she used to take (the 6) or, more important, whether or not you should be fooled by the rocks that she's got (know this: you should not).

"If you go through some of my albums, you'll see exactly what was going on in my life at that time," she says. "It's really an open book. You don't have to go through my garbage or follow me around. You can just listen to my music."

Or just wander around her offices a bit. Right near reception are two oversized flat-screen televisions, broadcasting her "Love Don't Cost a Thing" video—which just happens to co-star ex-hubby Judd. Indeed, each of her past paramours has been a collaborator, a muse or, in the case of 2002's syrupy ballad "Dear Ben," both. You'd think that song or the bizarrely self-referential "Jenny From the Block" video (that's the one in which Affleck love-taps her ass while they lounge on a yacht) would make her wince just a little bit.

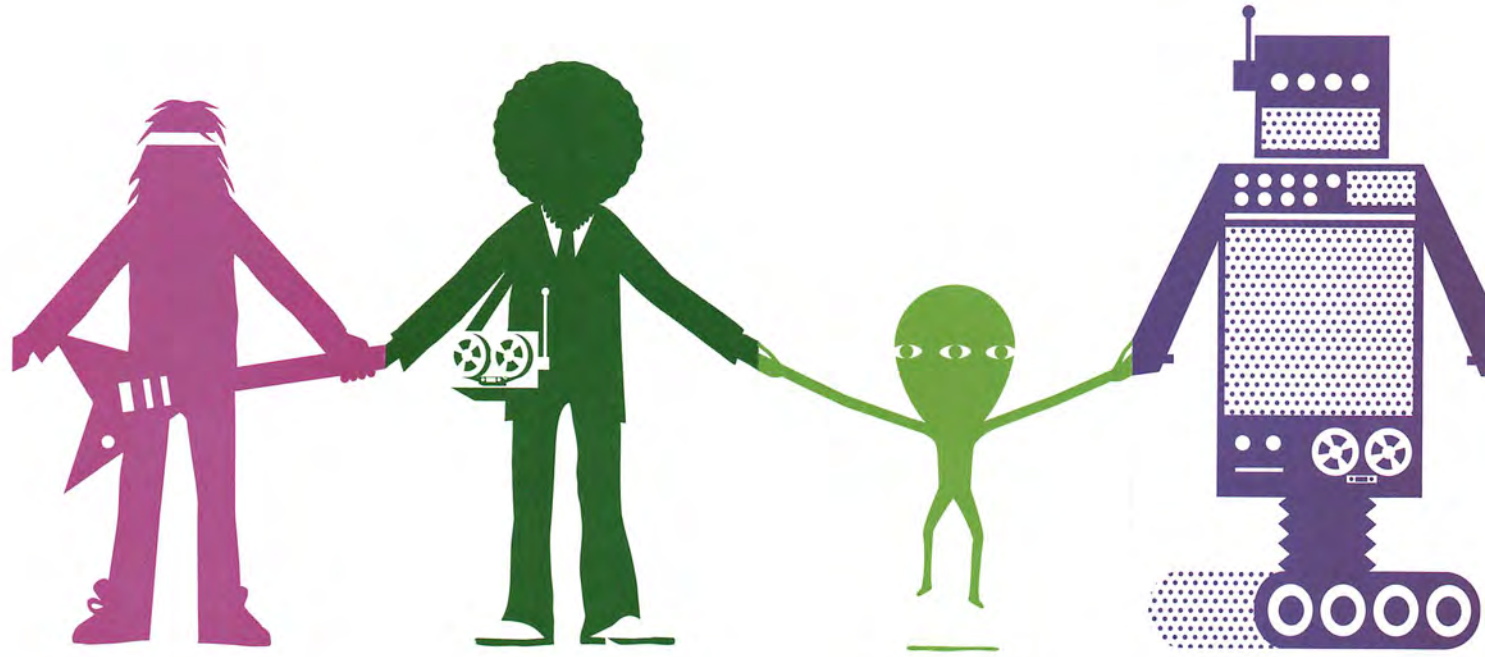
"No!" she insists. "It was a moment in time. The person I am now is different from the person I was then. Now, I maybe wouldn't do that. I'm being a little more private about certain things. I don't regret that. I did that full-heartedly and because I wanted to. It was what it was."

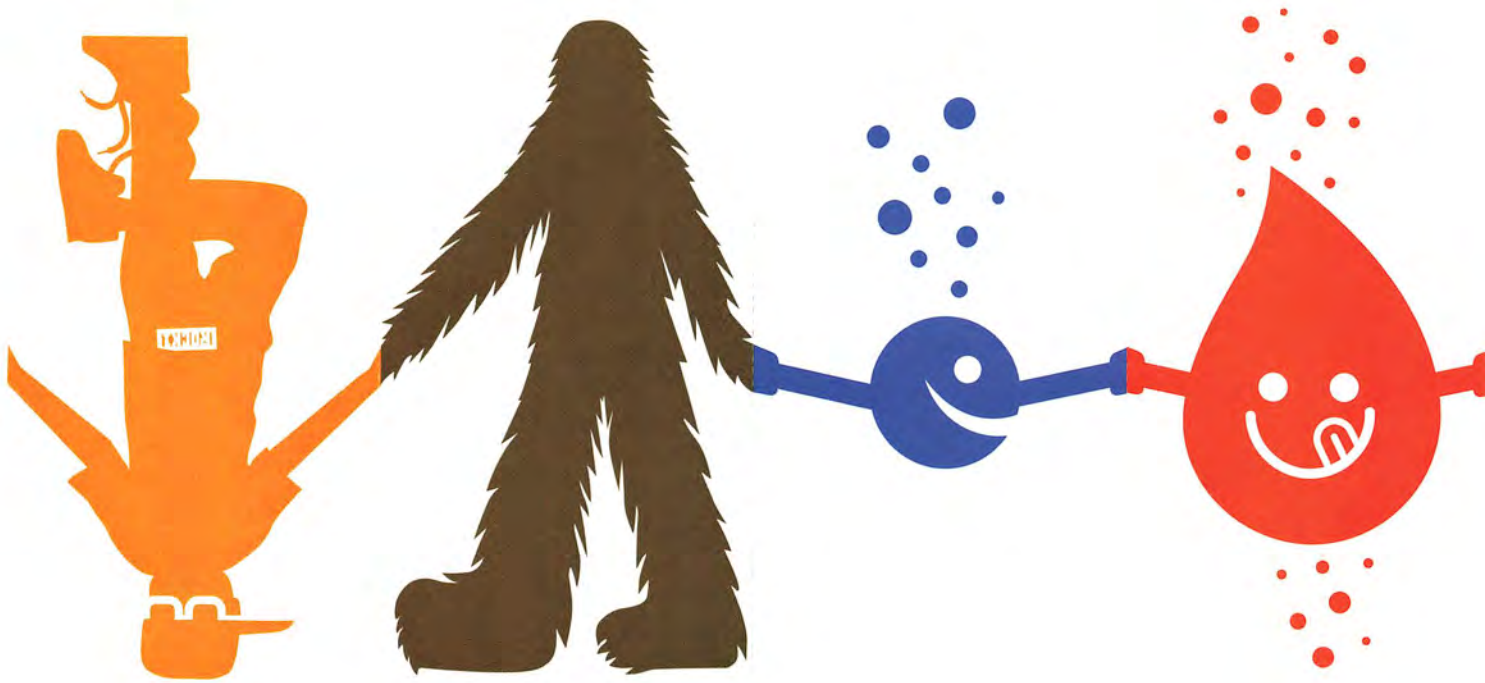
And yet she's made as much of a break from that time as she can, both as a brand (she's dropping the "J. Lo" moniker) and as a musician. *Rebirth* is Lopez's fourth album, and her strongest—not *Blonde on Blonde* strong, maybe, but definitely her most playful effort, and a nice leap forward from *J.Lo* and *This Is Me ... Then*.

The audible upgrade is due in part to a far more lax studio regimen: While Lopez previously shoehorned in recording time in New York City in between movie gigs, for *Rebirth* she and her team of producers rented a house in Encino, California, that once belonged to famed Motown maven Lamont Dozier; according to Rooney, many post-session evenings were spent barbecuing, hanging out poolside and watching Anthony hone his photography skills.

That chilled, artist's-colony vibe helped Lopez and crew produce a record that sounds far less boardroom than previous efforts. "Get Right," with its duck-call horn sample, is a fine runway-walk strutter (even if Usher says it was his sample first). But more hidden pleasures abound: "Cherry Pie" is a pastiche of *Around the World in a Day*–era Prince and Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam, while "(Can't Believe) This Is Me" finally stretches Lopez's voice. It's a breakup ballad, but a wickedly specific one—"You said these walls were here to protect us, but it's still not a home"; "Only boxes to define what was left of what we used to call love"—that's open to plenty of speculation as to

THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE: MARC ANTHONY





ONEIFY

THE BLEEPY ONE

I build your cars and explore your planets. You charge my microcontrollers and oil my joints. Everybody's happy when we work together.

ONEIFY.COM

THE FOREIGN ONE

Yes, his people have been known to abduct an earthling or two. But don't be alarmed; that's only because it gets lonely in outer space. Plus, they generally bring you back.

ONEIFY.COM

THE POETIC ONE

Microphone check
One
Two
Microphone check
One
One
With this poem
I am
Done.

ONEIFY.COM

THE LOUD ONE

It totally rocks when different people come together. Especially if they're foxy, and it's backstage.

ONEIFY.COM

THE TASTY ONE

Girls can have flavor. Boys can have flavor. But can a one calorie cola have flavor? Thanks to oneitedness, you bet.

ONEIFY.COM

THE SINGLE ONE

If one little calorie can bring together "low cal" and "full flavor," imagine what the rest of us can accomplish if we come together too.

ONEIFY.COM

THE HAIRY ONE

He's sensitive about his size and body hair, so give him a friendly wave the next time you see him in the forest. Or, better yet, invite him to your campfire for some s'mores.

ONEIFY.COM

THE ILLEST ONE

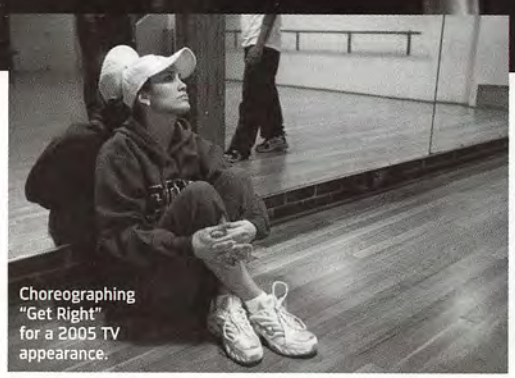
B-Boys and B-Girls: Be sure to stretch before popping, locking, up-rocking or down-rocking. You don't want to become one with the chiropractor.

ONEIFY.COM

This message of oneity is brought to you by Pepsi ONE®, the cola that brings together "one calorie" and "full flavor." Togetherness is better than Apartness. Oneify.™

PEPSI ONE, ONEIFY and the Pepsi Globe design are trademarks of PepsiCo, Inc.

If only *Celebrity Fit Club* looked more like this: Lopez firming and toning, 2005.



Choreographing "Get Right" for a 2005 TV appearance.

its bastardly muse.

"I wanted the song to be a big power ballad about somebody who did somebody wrong," she says. "Just, 'Get out, you're a fucking lie, and I don't want anything to do with you.' Which relationship is it about specifically? It could be all of them, it could be just one. It's something obviously I've been through, and the writers I wrote it with have been through."

One of those writers, tellingly, is Marc Anthony, whom Lopez met at a video shoot for her single "*No Me Ames*" in 1999. Even then he was revered in the Latino community for his soul-reaching range: "He's a living legend where I come from," says Fat Joe. "He's got the most beautiful voice in singing."

He also has a romantic rap sheet to rival Lopez's. Last summer, Anthony divorced former Miss Universe Dayanara Torres Delgado, his wife of four years and the mother of two of his three children (he has a daughter, Arianna, from a previous relationship). Only four days after the divorce was finalized, he and Lopez were married. Since then he has become Lopez's muse and mentor, helping her with her Spanish-language album, co-writing songs for *Rebirth* and guiding her in the studio.

"Marc and Jennifer have their own communication," notes Cory Rooney. "Obviously, [it's] because of their love connection. They found a way to communicate to the point where they almost have a signal. He can look at her while she's doing a vocal, and just point to his chest or his stomach, and she'll know. She looks up to him vocally so much. This album, the growth that she shows, he's part of the reason. There's no better coach than Marc."

And yet it has to be risky for Lopez, who has seen so many previous on-the-clock lovefests result in disaster. How did she know that leaning on Anthony so heavily on *Rebirth* wouldn't result in another *Gigli*?

"I don't think about that so much," Lopez says, as her high heels clank on the glass table, "and I'm not really interested in talking about us personally. I can tell you that, professionally, we work well together, and we met working. He always had a real belief in me as a singer. He's like, 'I know what's in there.' So when we started working on the Spanish stuff, we reached these heights that I never →

BIKINI TOP AND SKIRT BY ROBERTO CAVALLI
EARRINGS BY ALLESANDRO DELL ACQUA

↑ Recording her Spanish-language album in Miami, 2004.

LOPEZ TOOK A HALF-YEAR SABBATICAL, DOING, IN HER WORDS, "NOT A FUCKING THING."

thought I could reach.

"I've never been really confident in that sense," she says. "I felt like the new kid for the first couple of albums. I was afraid of making mistakes or trying anything risky, so I didn't. I'm in a very different place now."

The vocal turnaround couldn't have come at a better time. Lopez's suspiciously smooth choruses have always raised questions of in-studio sweetening. The charge hasn't dulled her album sales or pop-star luster, but, as Ashlee Simpson quickly learned, just one unintended peek behind the curtain can derail even the most micro-managed of careers.

But Cory Rooney denies Lopez relies on tech tricks: "She doesn't need me to match and patch and create some sort of miracle with her voice," he says. "Jennifer can sing anything on the album live. Does she have a voice like Fantasia [from] *American Idol*? No. Completely different. Does she have a voice like Diana Ross? Yes. Ross doesn't have a belting voice, she has a different sort of tone. From day one, when Jennifer didn't know technique in the studio, I said, 'We're gonna cheat. On every song, I want you to run lyrics like it's a script, and then I want you to act out every emotion while you're singing.'"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

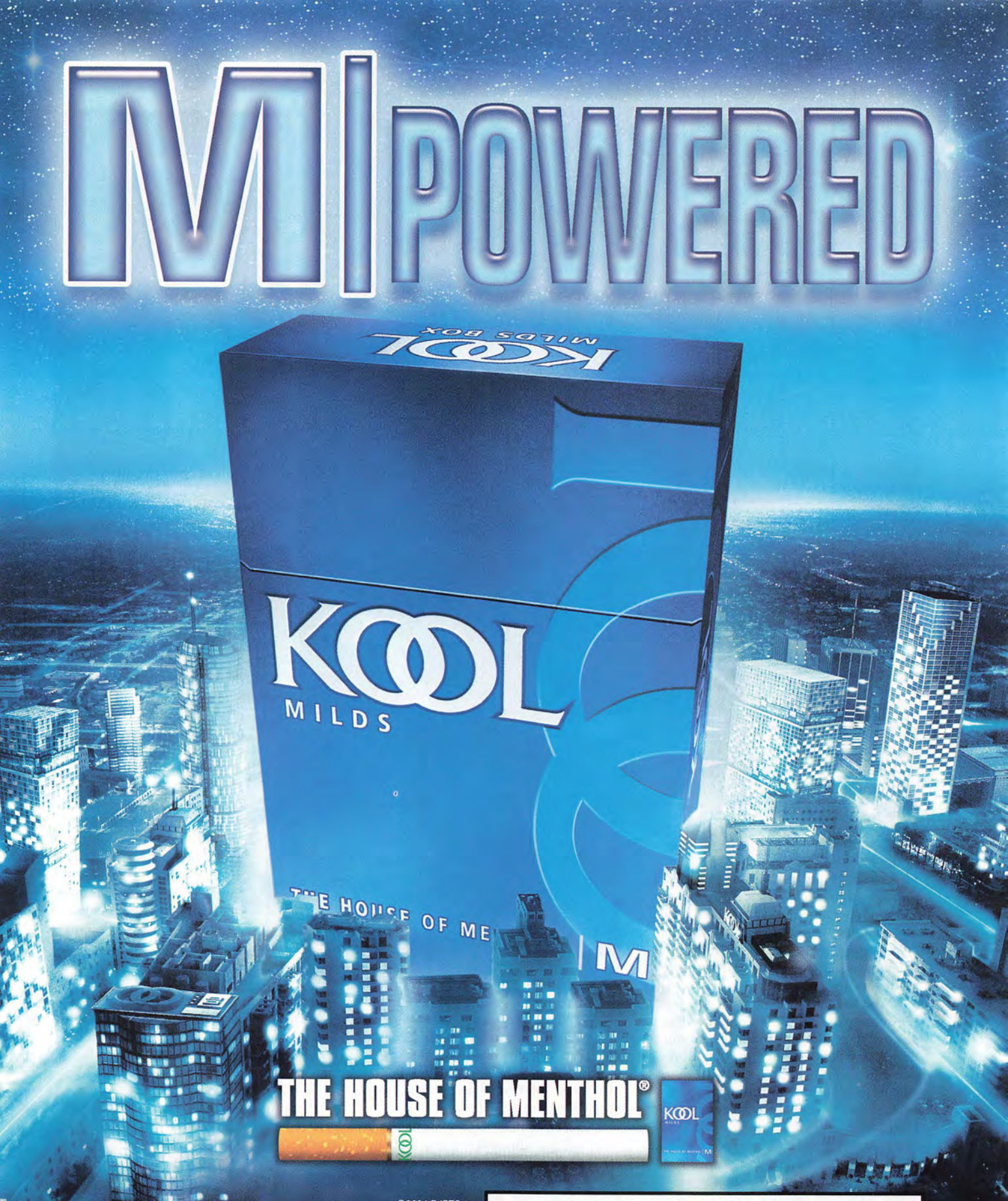
AFTER SUCCESSFULLY re-energizing her musical interests, Lopez has now turned her attention to her movie career —what she calls her "day job." If that's the case, she may want to start working overtime. When *Blender* tells Lopez we prepared for our chat by watching pretty much her entire filmography, she smiles incredulously: "You poor thing!"

Honestly, at first, it wasn't that bad: Lopez's early efforts—especially 1997's *Blood & Wine* and *U Turn*—played up her tough-girl sheen, and her intrigue was heightened by her supporting-part status. After 1998's outta sight *Out of Sight*, though, Lopez opted for frothy, wish-fulfillment romantic comedies (*The Wedding Planner*, *Maid in Manhattan*) that overplayed her "normal girl" persona a bit too much. By the time she got to 2003's suitably savaged *Gigli*, she was trying to have it both ways, and the strain showed—at least to anyone unfortunate enough to have seen it. Her best post-*Sight* scenes were in *Shall We Dance?*, in which she logged barely 30 minutes of screen time. Tellingly, Lopez has switched agents three times in the past eighteen months alone.

"In the beginning, you take what [roles] you can get," she says. "And then, when I started getting to make my own choices, I tended more toward the vulnerable characters, because I hadn't had a chance to play those kind. I followed that gut [feeling]. Now I want to get back to doing great acting with some great directors."

For that, she's reteaming with Gregory Nava, the director of ➔

MARC ANTHONY

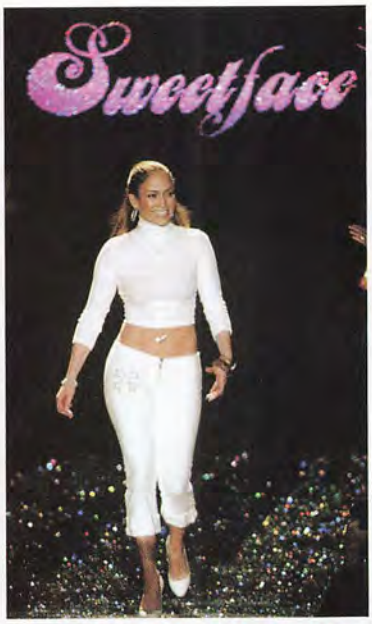


©2004 RJRTC

MILDS BOX: 10 mg. "tar", 0.9 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method. The amount of tar and nicotine you get from this product varies depending on how you smoke it. There is no such thing as a safe cigarette. For more information visit **www.bwtarnic.com**

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.

On the set of the forthcoming film *Monster-in-Law*.



↑ Lopez takes a curtain call at her Sweetface fashion show, February 12, 2005.

The view from the top: Lopez back in the Bronx, 2005.

Mi Familia and *Selena*, for the Mexico-set murder-thriller *Bordertown*; if it doesn't work out, be prepared for plenty of late-night monologue jokes and downward-spiral chronicles in *Us Weekly*. Either way, whether through defiance or denial, she's ready for them.

"You develop a tough skin," she says. "At some point, when you're not feeling so good, it gets to you and it breaks you down. Like the best of them, I have broken down and thought, 'Is this worth it?' It feels terrible. You go through depressions. I don't know of a performer at this level who hasn't gone through that. And that's part of why I took a break. I was tired. Beat-up. I wouldn't say I was in a depression; I've been through depressions, where it's just like, *uggggk*, and you can't pull yourself out of a funk and you don't wanna do anything. But those don't last long for me."

There's a knock on the door, and Marc Anthony swings in, like a recurring sitcom character waiting out his applause.

"Hi, baby!" Lopez squeaks as he walks behind the desk and buries his face into hers for a kiss. It's one of the few unscripted moments of the afternoon, a nice, lingering kiss between a still-enamored young couple, and yet ...

"Can't use this!" Lopez warns *Blender* only half-jokingly, and just like that she's off to do more planning for the fashion show. A few days later, it goes off pretty much seamlessly, with appearances by Ja Rule, Ashanti and Lil' Kim. *Blender* doesn't get to meet any models, but does manage to snag a placeholder card that says "Guest of David Copperfield."

As for Lopez, she runs down the catwalk and ducks out—she has a flight to catch to L.A., where, the next night, she'll perform "*Escapemonos*" with her hubby on the Grammys, singing live (take that, haters!) and holding her own, if barely, with one of music's most effortless voices. Their melodramatic duet may not have been musically flawless, but it was compulsively watchable: she classically glamorous, he precociously talented. They're Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton for the *People en Español* set.

But backstage at the Sweetface show, watching her bound back behind the curtain, Lopez barely seems able to enjoy the night, so crazed is she to start on the next big project, as if the multitasking metabolism just can't slow down, even for a moment. As is often the case when *Blender* is in need of some deep-rooted summation, we think of something Fat Joe once told us:

A few months ago, as they were finishing up work on *Rebirth*, he and Lopez were hanging out and talking about the crazed paces of their lives.

"When is it enough, J. Lo?" he asked.

"I guess when you don't love it no more, you don't like it," she replied. "You feel like you've had enough."

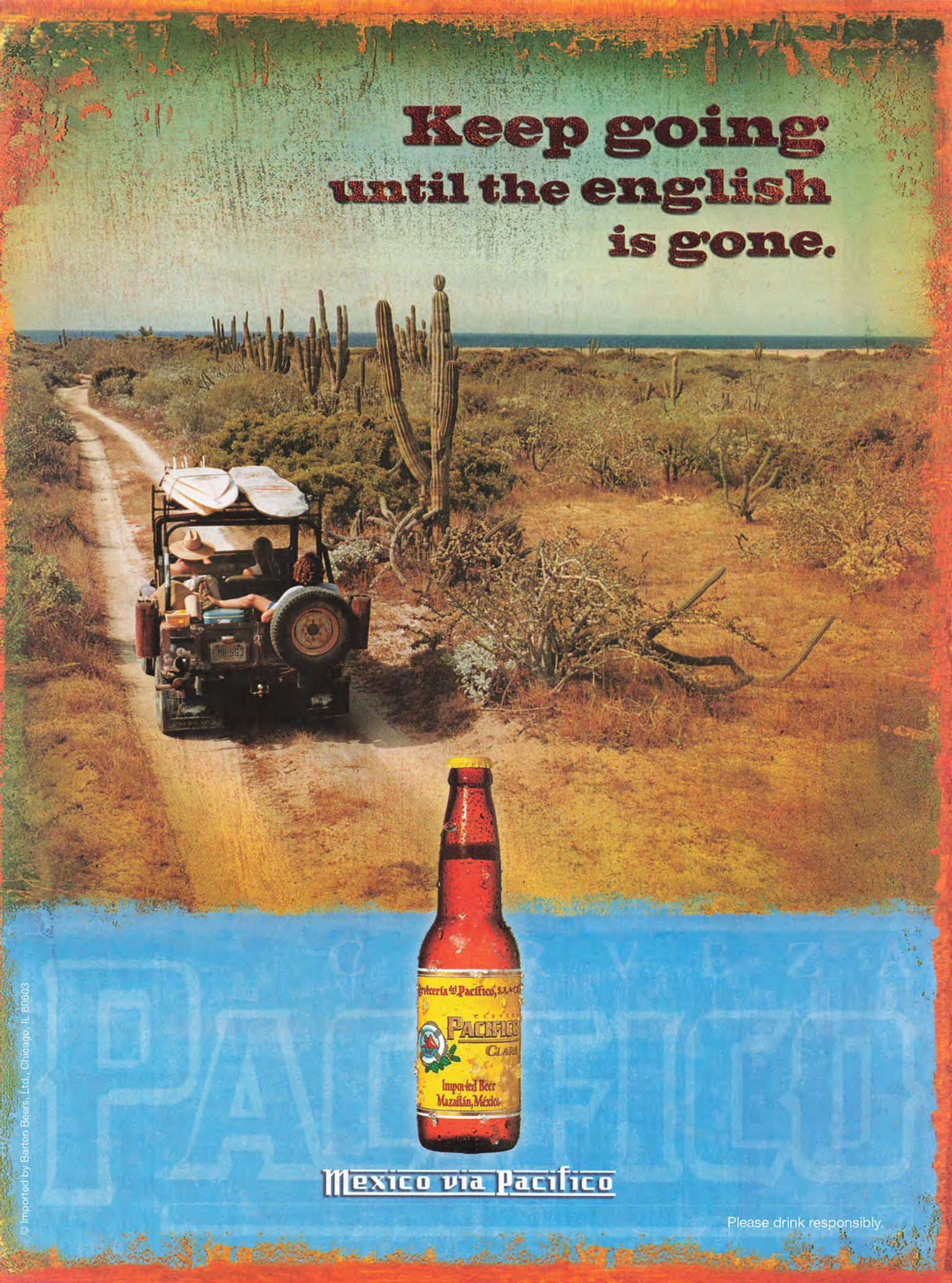
"Is it enough?"

"Not yet, Joe," she said. "Not yet." [BLENDER]

FOR MORE JENNIFER LOPEZ TURN TO PAGE 86 →

MARC ANTHONY (2); SWEETFACE; SETH WENIG/REUTERS

Keep going until the english is gone.



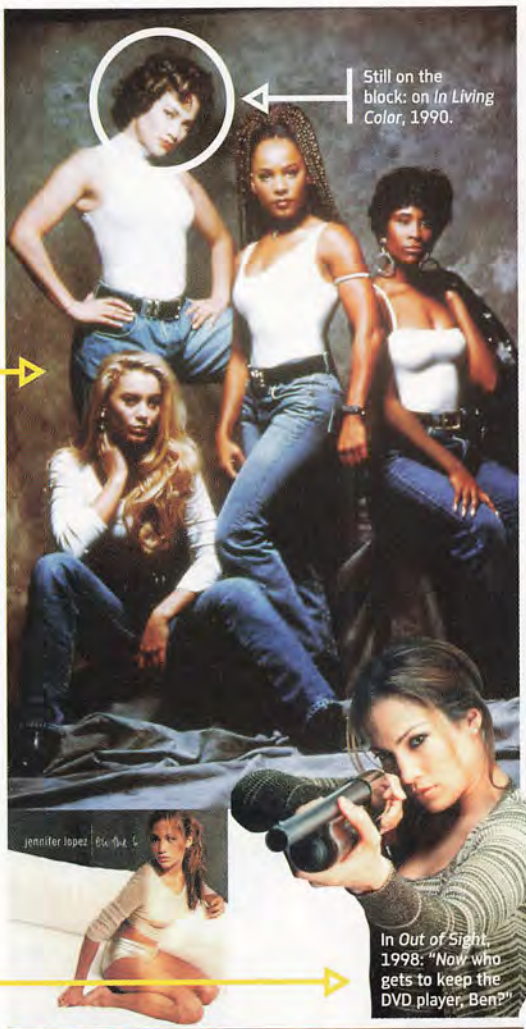
Mexico via Pacifico

Please drink responsibly.

© Imported by Barton Beers, Ltd., Chicago, IL 60603

5 THE PHASES OF JEN

FROM NATURAL-WAIST JEANS TO $25,000 DRESSES—A LOPEZ TIMELINE



1 FLY GIRL 1990–1997

BOYTOY High school romeo David Cruz

WHAT WENT WRONG? Burgeoning stardom. ("I was like a rocket, he was like a rock.")

EMPIRE BUILDING Dancing "Fly Girl" on Fox's *In Living Color*; bit parts in four short-lived TV series.

HOW "REAL"? Walked the red carpet at *Mi Vida Loca* premiere with frizzy hair, a shapeless dress and brown mules!

DIVA ALERT Turned down dancing gig on a Janet Jackson tour for a shot at TV stardom.

KEY PURCHASE Dancing lessons.

CELEB STOCK Slowly rising.

Where's a wardrobe malfunction when you need one? At the Grammys in 2000.

2 HOLLYWOOD BREAKOUT 1997–2000

BOYTOY Waiter Ojani Noa

WHAT WENT WRONG? Further stardom. Her steamy cameo in Puff Daddy's 1997 video "Been Around the World" probably didn't help either.

EMPIRE BUILDING Five movies, debut album.

HOW "REAL"? Names album *On the 6* after the train she rode from the Bronx.

DIVA ALERT In a poolside interview, Lopez disses Gwyneth Paltrow ("What has she been in?") and numerous other A-list actresses.

KEY PURCHASE Reported multimillion-dollar butt-cheek insurance policy.

CELEB STOCK Rising! Rising!

3 J. LO 2000–2002

BOYTOYS P. Diddy; Cris Judd

WHAT WENT WRONG? Lopez dumped Diddy over too-real 1999 nightclub shoot-out. Married baby-faced backup hoofer Judd on the rebound.

EMPIRE BUILDING Simultaneous No. 1 record and movie, clothing line, perfume, Madre's restaurant.

HOW "REAL"? Detained for 14 hours after fleeing the scene of the shooting.

DIVA ALERT Ordered a police officer to get her cuticle cream.

KEY PURCHASE Mink eyelashes.

CELEB STOCK Skyrocketing!

"You're my schmoopie!" "No, you're *my* schmoopie!" At the 2005 Grammys.

4 BENIFER 2002–2004

BOYTOY Ben Affleck

WHAT WENT WRONG? Back-to-back box office turkeys and decadent spending sprees weren't enough to salvage the engagement.

EMPIRE BUILDING Three movies, a CD, another perfume.

HOW "REAL"? Fried a piece of chicken on prime-time TV.

DIVA ALERT For her cameo in a music video for charity, Lopez reportedly demanded an all-white dressing room stocked with matching flowers, furniture and drapes.

KEY PURCHASE $15,000 diamond bracelet (from Ben Affleck, given the day she filed for divorce from Judd).

CELEB STOCK *Gigli*-induced plummet!

5 MRS. MARC ANTHONY 2004–present

BOYTOY Marc Anthony

WHAT WENT WRONG So far, so good!

EMPIRE BUILDING Another record, four more movies, new apparel line.

HOW "REAL"? Announced to the press that she would spend Christmas Day at Bronx shelters.

DIVA ALERT Stocked her houses in L.A. and Miami with 10,000 hangers from the Great American Hanger Company.

KEY PURCHASE The musical bed of the Usher/Rich Harrison song "Ride," which became her single "Get Right."

CELEB STOCK Stable.

VICTORIA DESILVERIO

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: NEAL PETERS COLLECTION; UNIVERSAL/KOBAL COLLECTION; MICHAEL CAULFIELD/WIREIMAGE.COM; JAMES DEVANEY/WIREIMAGE.COM; JEFF VESPA/WIREIMAGE.COM

New Stuff

PUMA
puma.com

CELL DEKA. AVAILABLE AT THE PUMA STORE AND SELECT RETAILERS. SNAKE NOT INCLUDED.

SXSW® 2005

MARCH 11 - 20 » AUSTIN, TEXAS » SXSW.COM

Music

March 16 - 20th

The **SXSW Music and Media Conference** showcases hundreds of musical acts from around the globe on fifty stages in downtown Austin, TX.

Film

March 11 - 19th

The **SXSW Film Conference and Festival** has quickly emerged as one of the world's premier venues for discovering new filmmakers as well as honoring established legends.

Interactive

March 11 - 15th

The **SXSW Interactive Festival** is where the web's most creative minds share their ideas about how interactive technology will shape our future.

CHRONICLE

LINCOLN

BLENDER MAGAZINE

Miller Lite

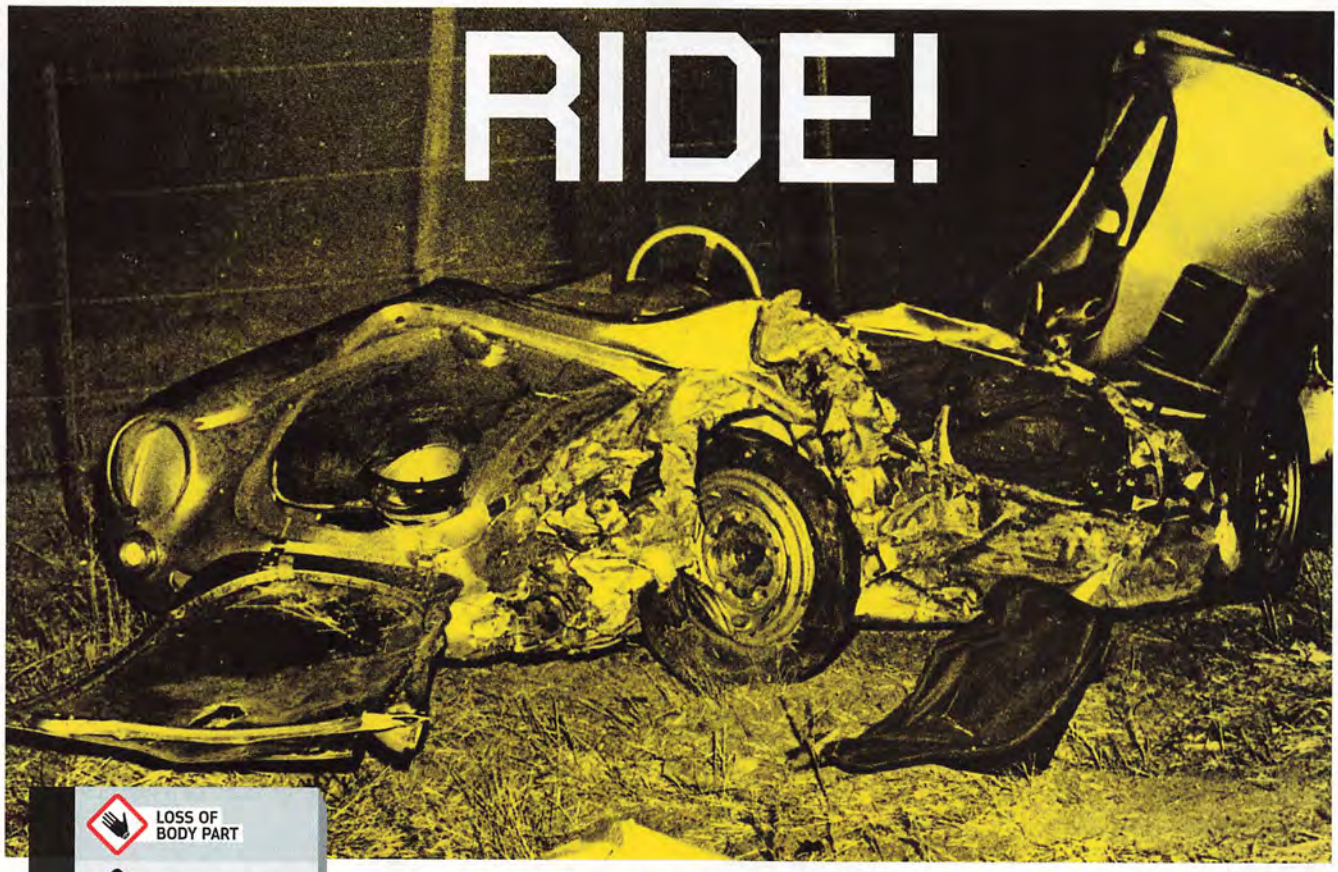
TalentMatch.com™
Talent, Industry and the Fans that Support Them.

ROCK'S WORST DRIVERS

CRASH my RIDE!

"BABY, YOU CAN DRIVE MY CAR," SANG THE BEATLES—WISELY. FOR WHENEVER ROCK STARS GET BEHIND A WHEEL, THE RESULTS TEND TO RANGE FROM THE INSANELY DANGEROUS TO THE TRAGICALLY TERMINAL.

BY CLARK COLLIS



ICON KEY

- LOSS OF BODY PART
- DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE
- REPEAT OFFENDER
- FATALITY
- INVOLVEMENT OF FIREARMS
- CRIMINAL CONVICTION
- IMPERSONATING A LAW-ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL

RUN FOR YOUR LIVES! IT'S . . .

BILLY JOEL

Accident-prone Piano Man

LICENSE AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE: Joel's automobile-related problems began in June 2002, when he drove his 1999 Mercedes-Benz into a post. The ivory-tickling troubadour checked himself into rehab just one week later but, in January 2003, plowed a different Benz into a tree, prompting supermodel ex-wife Christie Brinkley to say she feared for the life of their daughter. Subsequently, Joel kept his mishaps off-road for a period, shattering his wrist falling down stairs in October 2003 and cutting his finger opening a can of beans in April 2004. But later that month things returned to being just the way they were when, going out for pizza, Joel lost control of his 1967 Citroën and crashed into the wall of a house in Bayville, N.Y., cracking its foundation. As one comedian subsequently pointed out, "In the last two years Billy Joel has hit pretty much everything except the charts."

FROM TOP: KOBAL COLLECTION; EZIO PETERSEN/UPI/PHOTO SERVICE/NEWSCOM

Keith Richards: "Where's the bleedin' steering wheel?"

James Brown's other car is also a stretch limo.

ROLLING STONED

KEITH RICHARDS

Stones guitarist/junkie and, unsurprisingly, terrible motorist

LICENSE AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE: In the late '60s the walking—and, too often, driving—chemistry set purchased a 19-foot-long Mercedes that had once been a Nazi staff car. The fact that he immediately crashed it, had it rebuilt and then crashed it once again was probably connected to his penchant for snorting heroin prior to turning on the ignition and then falling asleep while the car was in motion. In 1971, Richards again took a nap while driving and wrecked another car. He did so yet again in 1976. His wife no longer lets him get behind the wheel—a state of affairs that perplexed the Living Chord, who remarkably insisted, "I'm a great driver!"

GET UP OFFA THAT GAS PEDAL

JAMES BROWN

Godfather of Soul, Interstate Car Chases

LICENSE AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE: James Brown likes to say he has a "doctorate in funk." He also has an advanced degree in "driving like a drug-addled nutjob." This was proved on September 24, 1988, when the soul legend led Georgia police officers on a car chase that found him driving first into South Carolina and then into a ditch, after the tires were shot out on his pickup truck. In the course of the chase Brown tried to run over two North Augusta cops. Tests subsequently revealed PCP in the singer's bloodstream. Despite Brown's claim that things had been "blown out of proportion," he was handed a six-year custodial sentence, becoming, as Eddie Murphy put it, "Soul brother No.1-5-5-4-1-3."

ALL SHOT UP

ELVIS PRESLEY

Trigger-happy King of Rock & Roll

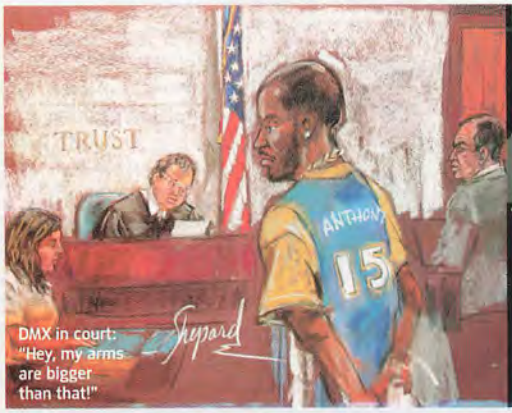
LICENSE AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE: Elvis loved cars so much he once bought 32 Cadillacs in a single day. But sometimes he hated them too. One car to feel the ire of the former truck driver was a 1971 Ford Pantera he purchased for wife Priscilla. After an argument with Mrs. Presley, the singer got into the car intending to drive away. Unfortunately—at least for the Pantera—he couldn't get the car to start and, enraged, started blasting away at the vehicle with his .22 caliber revolver. According to Dick Messer, director of L.A.'s Petersen Automotive Museum, which now owns the Pantera, "He was pretty short-fused. If things didn't go right, he'd just pull out his gun."

FAKE THA POLICE

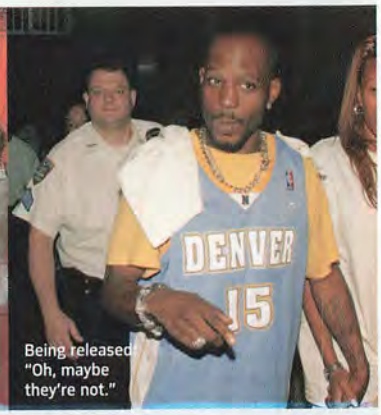
DMX

Feeb-impersonating hip-hop legend

LICENSE AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE: On June 24, 2004, the rapper told a parking attendant at JFK airport to let him leave the lot without paying a $9 ticket because he was an FBI agent. When the attendant refused, he crashed his 1998 Ford Expedition SUV through the gates. In another incident at the airport the same day, DMX ordered a driver to get out of his car after, the rapper claimed, he had cut him off. The driver declined to do so, despite the hip-hopper's again identifying himself as a federal agent. DMX then allegedly tried to drag the driver from his vehicle. He was arrested by police who found cocaine in the "zoned out" rapper's ride. In December, DMX pleaded guilty to driving while under the influence of drugs. He was fined $1,000 and directed to forfeit the Expedition. Commented prosecutor Gerald Brave, "It's the most expensive $9 parking ticket he ever avoided."



DMX in court: "Hey, my arms are bigger than that!"



Being released: "Oh, maybe they're not."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: HENRY DITZ/CORBIS; DOUGLAS KIRKLAND/CORBIS; THOS ROBINSON/STRINGER/GETTY IMAGES (2); FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES

Keith Moon reacts badly to getting a ticket.

CUT OFF AT THE KNEE

KHUJO

Vehicularly maimed Goodie Mob rapper

LICENSE AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE: "Somewhere along 75 South the devil sang me a lullaby," Khujo would later recall of the events of June 25, 2002, when, early in the morning, he fell asleep driving from a recording studio to his home in Stockbridge, Atlanta. The rapper, born Willie Knighton, was woken by the impact of a freeway rail slicing through his cherry-red Cadillac. After Khujo was rescued from his car, doctors amputated the 30-year-old's right leg from the shin down. "My thoughts on how this thing is going to turn out are all good," he claimed a couple of months later. Indeed, after being fitted with a prosthetic limb, he would appear on Outkast's *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below* album.

NON-DESIGNATED DRIVER

KEITH MOON

Chauffeur-crushing Who skinsman

LICENSE AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE: In January 1970, Moon and wife Kim got into their S1 Bentley, only to be surrounded by a crowd of English skinheads. Moon's chauffeur, Neil Boland, got out of the car to try to clear a path but was attacked. Panicking, Moon clambered into the driver's seat and drove the car for 100 yards before stopping. A bystander pointed out there was someone trapped in the vehicle's chassis. Kim Moon later recalled, "Keith went underneath. He put his head down and pulled out brains." The gray matter belonged to Boland, who was declared dead on arrival at a nearby hospital. Moon pleaded guilty to driving under the influence of alcohol. He never served a day behind bars.

UNARMED AND DANGEROUS

RICK ALLEN

Limb-challenged Def Leppard drummer

LICENSE AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE: On New Year's Eve, 1984, the then-still-fully-limbed Allen was driving his Corvette Stingray along Britain's A57 highway when he was overtaken by an Alfa Romeo. "Then I saw the driver up ahead, slowing down," the metal skinsman later recalled. "I tried to pass him, but he speeded up. We played this stupid game for four miles. Finally I lost my temper and put my foot down." Allen took a corner too fast, rolled his car and was thrown through the sun roof—sans left arm. According to Allen, "All I remember was standing in the field saying, 'I'm a drummer and I've lost my arm.'"

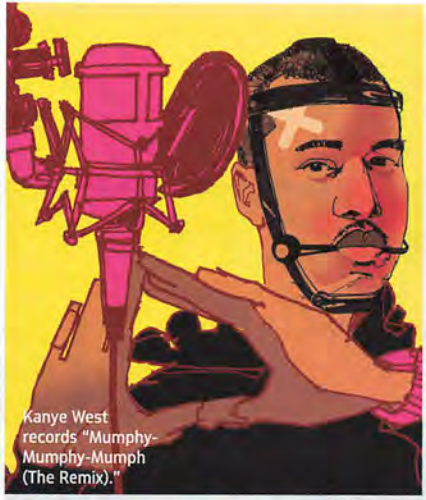
HAIR-METAL MAYHEM

VINCE NEIL

ROCK'S WORST DRIVER!

Mötley Crüe manslaughterer

LICENSE AND REGISTRATION, PLEASE: In December 1984, during a several-days-long party to celebrate the start of "work" on Mötley Crüe's third album, Neil convinced Hanoi Rocks drummer Nicholas "Razzle" Dingley to accompany him on a beer run. On the return journey, Neil, who was driving almost 40 miles over the 25 mph speed limit, lost control of his '72 Ford Pantera and collided with a Volkswagen. Razzle was killed and both occupants of the other vehicle were injured. Neil pleaded guilty to vehicular manslaughter and was sentenced to 30 days' imprisonment. Said Neil: "Now people hated me even more than before."



Kanye West records "Mumphy-Mumphy-Mumph (The Remix)."

SMASH HITS!

BUCKLE UP—IT'S THE FIVE GREATEST CAR-CRASH SONGS OF ALL TIME. AIRBAGS NOT INCLUDED.

KANYE WEST

"THROUGH THE WIRE" *(2003)*

THE MORAL: Remember to wear a seatbelt, as an asleep-at-the-wheel West did when he plowed into an oncoming car in 2002. And then, finesse your horrific car accident into a multiplatinum career!

SADDEST LYRIC: "How do you console my mom or give her light support/When you telling her your son's on life support?"

RAY PETERSON

"TELL LAURA I LOVE HER" *(1960)*

THE MORAL: Never enter a stock-car race in the hope of winning enough money to pay for a wedding ring.

SADDEST LYRIC: "No one knows what happened that day/Or how his car overturned in flames/But as they pulled him from the twisted wreck/With his dying breath, they heard him say/Tell Laura I love her."

J. FRANK WILSON AND THE CAVALIERS

"LAST KISS" *(1964)*

THE MORAL: Allow sufficient distance between yourself and the car in front—unless you want your date to turn into a wake.

SADDEST LYRIC: "I couldn't stop, so I swerved to the right/I'll never forget the sound that night/The screamin' tires, the bustin' glass/The painful scream that I heard last."

RADIOHEAD

"AIRBAG" *(1997)*

THE MORAL: Three cheers for Teutonic engineering!

SADDEST LYRIC: "In a fast German car, I'm amazed that I survived/An airbag saved my life."

THE BLOOD BROTHERS

"LOVE RHYMES WITH HIDEOUS CAR WRECK" *(2004)*

THE MORAL: If you treat your girlfriend like dirt and then dump her, don't be surprised if she doesn't visit you in the hospital.

SADDEST LYRIC: "When they pulled you out/You didn't know your name/Exploding semi truck blurred your face with flame."

CLARK COLLIS

MOON: CORBIS; WEST: JOHN JAY

"WE'RE HERE TO FIGHT EVIL"

IF "DEATH ROCKERS" **MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE** SAY THEY'RE SUPERHEROES, THEN WHO IS *BLENDER* TO ARGUE? WE JUST DON'T REMEMBER SPIDER-MAN HAVING SO MANY PROBLEMS WITH DRINK, DRUGS AND SWEARING IN FRONT OF KIDS.

BY DORIAN LYNSKEY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEGO

ONE DAY LAST AUGUST, Gerard Way boarded a plane to Japan with the gnawing conviction that he might not be coming back. Over the past year, the 27-year-old singer for the rock group My Chemical Romance had got it into his head that he had to be drunk to perform, and then needed Xanax to switch off his brain afterwards, and the combination was making him suicidally depressed. Way didn't like being suicidally depressed, so he'd often add cocaine to the mix. That's when his mood *really* got black. He spent the days before the flight saying goodbye to friends in New Jersey, just in case.

In Japan, Way spent all his time drunk. Before the final Tokyo show, he got so trashed on Heinekens and vodka tonics that he realized, even as he was performing, that he wouldn't be able to remember anything about it the next day. After he came off-stage he spent half an hour throwing up in a garbage can, until there was nothing coming up except bile. *Tonight*, he thought to himself, his hair caked with vomit, *I've drunk my last drink*.

"It was a vicious circle," he says matter-of-factly. "I needed it to function but it made me want to kill myself. It made me extremely unpredictable and dangerous to myself. I didn't want it to get to the point where it became like a VH1 *Behind the Music* where they show this really bad picture of me 30 pounds overweight, throwing up on the floor in Berlin. I didn't want that to happen to this band."

Way's cold-turkey flight back to the band's home of Belleville, New Jersey, was excruciating—almost 7,000 miles of skin-crawling, sweat-soaked willies. "I got really emotional outside the airport when we landed. I didn't know if I was going to see these guys again." He went straight to his therapist and booked into Alcoholics Anonymous, knowing that in the same week My Chemical Romance had to replace their drummer, film a video and start their tour. And you thought you'd had a hard week at work.

"We got through the hard shit," says Way. "This is the easy part."→

MAKEUP BY ANDIE MARKOE-BYRNE FOR KIEHL'S

LEFT TO RIGHT: TANK BY CALVIN KLEIN SHIRTS BY NAUTICA PANTS BY DICKIES BOOTS BY DR. MARTENS

My Chemical Romance (left to right): Mikey Way, Ray Toro, Gerard Way, Frank Iero, Bob Bryar.

ANY FEARS LAST summer that My Chemical Romance were going to implode into obscurity were knocked flat by their swaggering teen-dysfunction anthem "I'm Not Okay (I Promise)." Inspired by the high school experiences of Way and his friends, it delivers angst-rock verities with a knowing wink, not to mention the kind of melody that ignites careers. The tongue-in-cheek video, filmed in the same L.A. high school as *Donnie Darko*, depicted MCR as proudly geeky misfits. It was a role that didn't require much rehearsal.

Way calls My Chemical Romance's music "death rock." Others have tagged it goth punk or emo. Some endearing individuals have overcome genre confusion by simply calling MCR faggots. "Our guitarist Frank met somebody who said, 'How do you feel when people stop liking your band because they find out you're gay?'" says Way, curling his lip with pointed amusement.

To the more meat-headed members of the Warped tour fraternity, some eyeliner and the occasional ambivalent lyric (in "You Know What They Do to Guys Like Us in Prison," Gerard sings "I'll kiss your lips again" to a male character) are too much to process, but Way hopes MCR can change a few minds.

"We've always tried to switch the way people think about rock bands," he says. "That [lyric] puts a dividing line between people. Are you on our side and you want to be different or are you on that side and you want to throw a football at my head?"

Only a morbid former comic-book artist from blue-collar New Jersey could have hatched a band as toughly unorthodox as My Chemical Romance. Gerard Way writes the songs with his bandmates—his bassist brother Mikey Way, guitarists Ray Toro and Frank Iero, and new drummer Bob Bryar—but the vision is all his. He illustrates the record sleeves and defines their image. Recently he chose matching shirts, ties and armbands for the band to wear in the video for "Helena," taking enormous care not to resemble (a) the Hives or (b) the Nazis.

Most important, he's the one who assembled the band back in late 2001, when September 11 jolted him out of his rut as a struggling illustrator. On their 2002 debut album, *I Brought You My Bullets, You Brought Me Your Love*, and last year's *Three Cheers for Sweet Revenge*, MCR yoke the thunder of punk to the black humor of Morrissey, Nick Cave and Tom Waits, and blaze with purpose.

"There are bands that are in it for the wrong reason, polluting the airwaves and filling their own pockets," Gerard growls. "Or just saying, Oh I wanna be a rock star. Right. You've got a lot of kids following you. What are you saying to them?"

So what are MCR saying?

He's ready for this one. "We're saying it's OK to be messed up. There's other people just like you. And if we stick together we'll get through this."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WHEN GERARD WAS still working in comic books, his favorite creation was *The Amazing Goffo Brothers, Piano Movers Extraordinaire*. A black comedy set in a creepy, anonymous city, it was a metaphor for the relationship between him and his younger brother, Mikey.

"Just dial 1-800-CRAZY-CULT."

Despite their age difference (Gerard is 27; Mikey is 24), the Way brothers wore matching outfits as children. Today, the Ways arrive at a Midtown Manhattan restaurant wearing identical black jackets, but that's the only visible similarity.

With his blood-red tie, ink-black hair and snow-pale skin, Gerard looks part Jack White, part Edward Scissorhands, and sounds as if he's been hanging out at the Bada Bing! club. His stick-thin sibling, meanwhile, wears oblong-framed glasses and the kind of candy-striped wool hat favored by fourth-graders and fashion stylists. He has the most extraordinary laugh: a shrill, girlish giggle that causes waiters to turn their heads.

"WE'RE SAYING IT'S OK TO BE MESSED UP."

They grew up in the predominantly Italian-American town of Belleville, in *Sopranos* country—the Pizzaland restaurant glimpsed in the show's opening credits is a few blocks from the house they still live in with their auto-mechanic dad and hairdresser mom. In Jersey, says Gerard, "There's a 99% chance you're not going to do anything with your life."

Mikey yelps with pretend outrage.

"Well, 90%, maybe," his brother concedes in a deadpan drawl. "Every time I come back to Jersey, it's ready to put its tentacles all over me and suck me right back in. If I'm home for more than three weeks, I forget I'm in a band. I start to fill out applications for supermarkets."

Is there anything *good about the Garden State?*

"I think it gives you a bleak outlook on life, which is awesome," says Mikey, cackling. "It gives you an edge. When you're from Jersey, people act like you're from Rikers."

Gerard nods. "Sometimes all we have to do is get up there, make some feedback and say, 'Yeah we're from Noo Joisey,' and then hit 'em like a bomb. People are like, 'Hey, I don't want to get beat up!'"

After high school, Gerard studied art and Mikey drifted his way through college: "I thought college was a place you went to find people to be in a band with." Sometimes they played in bands together, but Gerard was more committed to becoming an artist, which was proving to be a disheartening process. When he eventually quit, his big project was a magic cartoon chimp called Breakfast Monkey. "I was doing bullshit," he shrugs.

After September 11, Gerard wrote his first song, "Skylines and Turnstiles," and played it to an old friend, drummer Matt Pelissier. Pelissier knew a guitarist called Ray Toro. "They played me their one song

LEGO

and I was jumping around the attic and headbanging," says Toro, a genial, frizzy-haired film buff with a caricature of Alfred Hitchcock tattooed on his left arm. "Gerard sounded really sincere about wanting to start something real. That's what made me excited."

The members of My Chemical Romance aren't especially weird—it's not like any of them collect skulls or serial-killer memorabilia—but they all grew up with reasons to feel like outsiders.

Toro was a shy kid with an overprotective mother. Instead of going out with friends, he'd stay at home playing guitar to Jimi Hendrix or Metallica. Guitarist Frank Iero suffered from bronchitis and ear infections and was ill almost constantly until the fifth grade. He was raised by his mom after she split from his dad, a musician who worked on records by John Lennon and Kiss. "I'm in the family

My Chemical Romance are sponsored by Tie Rack.

music industry," he says. "My dad would ask me how school was, but mostly it was, 'When are you going to start playing?'"

Jazz-trained drummer Bob Bryar was an Illinois kid "who took apart radios and stuff and then tried to put them back together and realized they didn't work." He has a dark sense of humor that can sometimes come off as surliness. "I get these urges to fuck off sometimes," he says. "I find it hard to entertain myself."

Bryar befriended the rest of the band in 2003, when he was a soundman for the Used, whom My Chemical Romance were supporting. When relations with Pelissier deteriorated, he stepped in. The new lineup had just two days to practice before their next tour.

"I haven't relaxed in a long time," sighs Iero. "I look forward to that. I'd like to take a step back and look at some newspaper clippings."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

THE NEXT MORNING, the sky is the color of a dirty washbowl and it's being emptied on New Jersey. Brian Schechter, My Chemical Romance's manager, taps at his cellphone as he steers his car through the damp, gray streets to pick up the Ways. We collect Mikey first.

"Did you see that MTV.com headline?" he asks, still wearing his striped hat. "'MCR Aim for Smashing Pumpkins Status.' It was out of context, but it's OK. It makes people think it's possible."

The band's destination is Philadelphia's Theatre of Living Arts. A local radio station held a competition between high schools to raise the most food for homeless shelters, the prize being an exclusive My Chemical Romance show. Considering the audience will be as young as 13, some adjustments need to be made. "We should probably have a PG show tonight," says Schechter. "We didn't do a show for charity just for Gerard to call them a bunch of motherfuckers."

It's a forlorn hope. "Put your fucking hands together!" cries Gerard within minutes of stepping onstage. In a black-velvet suit, red tie and black armband, he struts across the stage, wagging his finger to the lyrics or spraying mouthfuls of water over the front rows, while his band compress punk, metal, goth and glam into furiously concise pop songs. When he introduces "Headfirst for Halos" as "a song about suicide," you can almost feel the ripples of concern from the adult chaperones lurking around the edges of the room. However, even they can't resist tapping a toe to "I'm Not Okay (I Promise)." Last night MCR played it on *The Late Show With David Letterman*. Tonight they're playing it to a couple hundred Philadelphia high school kids. *Letterman* was a highlight of their career to date, but it's here that the song makes most sense.

"I didn't do my usual thing, where I compare high school to prison," protests Gerard later, sucking on a cigarette in a dimly lit backstage office. He admits he can see how people might get the wrong idea about MCR. "Journalists usually portray us as a fucked-up, dark, vampire, alcoholic rock band. Until they meet us."

Although he's got the charisma and the goth pinup looks to be an angst-rock martyr, Gerard seems too grounded to play the feel-my-pain card. Maybe it's the Jersey in him. Even when he talks about his therapist (a "rad guy" who turned him on to Brian Eno), he's pragmatic.

"If you're in this band, you're in it for the right reasons," Gerard declares. "You're not in it for money or fame. You're in it to do some good. Becoming more popular, it's like people are granting us superpowers and we have to use them to fight evil."

Is that the comic books talking?

"Oh yeah," he says, his grin a pearly sliver in the gloom. "We're like the Doom Patrol." [BLENDER]

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: ETHAN MILLER/REUTERS/CORBIS; EVERETT COLLECTION; BETTMAN CORBIS

Martha with a present for her cellmate, "Big Irma."

YOU FROM JOISEY? I'M FROM JOISEY!

MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE ARE BUT THE LATEST STARS TO EMERGE FROM THE SWAMPS OF THE GARDEN STATE ...

MARTHA STEWART

WHAT EXIT? 150 (Garden State Parkway)

BADA-BING! The home-decorating kingpin learned everything about tea cozies and insider trading as a child in suburban Nutley.

TELLTALE SIGN OF JERSEYNESS: Conspiracy? Obstruction of justice? Multiple indictments? You can take the girl outta Jersey, but ...

JOHN TRAVOLTA

WHAT EXIT? 71 (Rt. 95)

BADA-BING! Don't let the Malibu estates and the Scientology mumbo-jumbo fool you: Travolta's straight outta Englewood.

TELLTALE SIGN OF JERSEYNESS: A lifetime of breathing toxic Jersey air prepared him well for *The Boy in the Plastic Bubble*.

AARON BURR

Aaron Burr. And that's his *good* side!

WHAT EXIT? 15 (N.J. Turnpike)

BADA-BING! Thomas Jefferson's Newark-born vice-president killed his archrival Alexander Hamilton during a duel in Weehawken in 1804.

TELLTALE SIGN OF JERSEYNESS: Only a veep from Essex County would handle a political beef Tony Soprano–style.

BUZZ ALDRIN

WHAT EXIT? 148 (Garden State Parkway)

BADA-BING! The second man to set foot on the moon was born and raised in Montclair.

TELLTALE SIGN OF JERSEYNESS: No one better illustrates the lengths to which some people will go just to escape N.J.

SHAQUILLE O'NEAL

WHAT EXIT? 15 (N.J. Turnpike)

BADA-BING! Before becoming the NBA's most dominant center and starring in *Kazaam*, Shaq grew up—way up—in Newark.

TELLTALE SIGN OF JERSEYNESS: Shaq recently warned former teammate Kobe Bryant that charging the lane against him might result in physical unpleasantness. He sure didn't learn the art of the threat from playing in Orlando. *STEVE KANDELL*

SPEND OUR CASH!

"I WANT TO BANKRUPT SOME BOOKIES!"

CAN POP-RAP SENSATIONS THE BLACK EYED PEAS INCREASE THEIR *BLENDER*-PROVIDED $848 STAKE BY PICKING WINNERS AT THE RACE TRACK? DON'T BET ON IT.

BY CLARK COLLIS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN STEPHENS

"I'M NOT TOO familiar with horses," says the Black Eyed Peas' frontman, will.i.am, as he drives across Los Angeles in his Hummer. "I know which end is the head and which is the ass. But that's about it."

It is an admission that raises the question of why the band has decided to spend the day—and $848 of *Blender*'s money—betting on horses at Santa Anita Park racetrack. Particularly as the rapper, born William Adams, has just got off a flight from Miami ("I was there 11 hours"), where he was collaborating with producer Timbaland on a track for the band's upcoming CD, *Monkey Business*.

"It sounded like a good opportunity to dress up and have a day out," explains will. "And it was always forbidden to gamble in my house. But if my homies are doing it, then I'll join in. And I always end up being the lucky one."

This good fortune is shared by the rest of the group, who we meet just inside the beautiful, sun-blasted course and who are collectively attired in a fashion Joan Rivers might describe as "Ghetto bling meets *Seabiscuit*."

"I played here in a band when I was about 11," recalls singer and former child actor Stacy "Fergie" Ferguson. "I had my dad bet on a horse called Pink Lady, because it reminded me of Pinky Tuscadero from *Happy Days*. I won about $20."

The band's soft-spoken, Philippines-born MC, Allen Pineda (a.k.a. apl.de.ap), also admits to good fortune betting-wise, having once won $500 on a horse called Mile High Club. Meanwhile, the fourth Pea, Jaime "Taboo" Gomez, claims to have the luck of the Irish, despite being "a Mexican kid from East L.A."

"This is my first time betting on horses, but I'm looking forward to it," enthuses the rapper, who will not stop

$848 CHALLENGE!

THE BAND
BLACK EYED PEAS

THE MISSION
TO SPEND $848 IN ONE DAY ANY WAY THEY WANT

THE REASON
BLENDER ASKED THEM TO!

HORSE: JERRY COOKE/CORBIS

"Should our horse be running backwards?"

The Peas (left to right): apl, Taboo, will, Fergie.

"Whaddaya mean Seabiscuit isn't running?"

grinning all day. "I've always considered myself a lucky person. Then I met these guys and I became blessed."

In truth, the Peas do have a lot to be thankful for. The massive success of their third album, 2003's *Elephunk*, came just in time to save a band that was a whisker away from oblivion.

"There was a point where we felt like giving up," says will.i.am, as the band settle themselves in the restaurant overlooking the track, to study their racing programs. "We were putting apl in rehab for speed. It was after September 11, and we were like, who gives a fuck about my 'mad styles'? We said, let's write some shit that we felt. So we wrote 'Where Is the Love?' and 'Let's Get Retarded.' We turned it in to the record company and they didn't like it. So, I said, 'Fuck it, I'm done.' Then, a year later, the company reheard it, and everything is history."

Indeed, *Elephunk* would go on to sell more than two million copies and make the quartet rich. Despite this, they carefully divide their $848 down to the last dollar, a legacy of the decade will, apl and Taboo spent in impoverished obscurity. During those years, Fergie was having her own troubles: She became addicted to crystal meth and dropped to 90 lbs. After cleaning up, a different set of problems presented themselves when the singer joined the band for *Elephunk*.

"The hardest thing was going onstage," she recalls. "These guys had been performing together for 10 years, and they don't rehearse! So I just winged it, and it was hard. There were a lot of nights when I felt humiliated and I cried. But 400-something shows later, I feel very comfortable on the stage."

Certainly, today, the singer couldn't look happier as she elegantly picks at her chicken lunch, peers out at the horses trotting out for the first race or listens intently to the advice of a new friend, an ominously named "tipster" called Bruno, who has offered to help the band "pick some winners." Will is also keen for words of wisdom, but only if they confirm his view that he should bet on the horse with the longest odds. "I want to bankrupt some bookies!" he announces.

"I'm not going to talk you out of any bet," says Bruno. "With a long shot, yeah, if you win, you win a lot of money. But what's your chance of winning? It's like going to a club and looking for chicks. Some long shots are like when a woman has got a boyfriend and a husband already there. You've got no chance."

"DAMN, THOSE JOCKEYS ARE SMALL! WHY CAN'T THEY JUST HAVE MIDGETS?"

"See, I would think that I would have a chance," retorts will. "Because if her husband *and* her boyfriend are there, I know she's freaky-deaky, dawg!"

So it is that will bets on the horse with the longest odds to win in the first race, while the rest of the band largely follow Bruno's advice. The result? All concerned make at least a few bucks—except will, whose horse, which he had bet "to win," comes in third.

"I should have bet for show," he announces. "But that's cheating!"

The band's betting patterns are repeated in the next two races, with Fergie, apl and Taboo all betting on favorites or near-favorites while will squanders his cash on creatures seemingly destined to wind up at the glue factory before the day is out. Undeterred, for the fourth race he puts his last $300 on a horse named Bear Witness to win. To get a better look at the contest, the band decamp to ground level to watch as the horses and their riders pass by on their way to the starting line.

"Damn, those jockeys are small!" exclaims will. "Why can't they just have midgets? Why isn't Mini-Me taking part? I want a miniature Clydesdale. Take it to the hip-hop shows—on a leash! That is the next shit."

And then ... they're off! The Peas cheer their respective horses, particularly will, who stands to make $9,000 if his horse crosses the line first.

"This is going to buy me a new car!" he says, gleefully. And win it does—in the race to see who can come in last.

"I guess this place is going to be in business for a while yet," will grumbles, tearing up his race ticket.

All in all, however, the band are about even on the day, and decide to head off to the course gift shop. There, apl buys a toy stable for one of his young relations back in the Philippines, while Fergie purchases a hip flask for a "special someone" that *Blender* would happily bet $848 is her beau, actor Josh Duhamel.

"This has been a great thing—a learning experience!" exclaims Taboo, although by now it is clear that the resolutely ebullient rapper would probably say the same about having his nuts electrocuted.

"A lot of the time, I had absolutely no fucking clue what was going on with the betting," says Fergie. "And next time, I probably wouldn't wear a hat with flowers. I seem to be the only one here with one of those. But it was a lot of fun."

As he prepares to leave, even the now-penniless will seems happy. "Well, I've learned a lesson" he says.

And what might that be?

"When it's not your money—spend it!" [BLENDER]

HOW THEY SPENT IT

BLACK EYED PEAS
SANTA ANITA PARK
JANUARY 14, 2005

GAMBLING WAGES	$848
TOTAL	$848

The serious art of instant messaging.

Go high performance—without going over the top in price! New **Fuzion™ HRi** tires let you show off one slick-looking set of asymmetrical treads. But these beauties know how to deliver strong traction—wet or dry. That's because new Fuzion HRi tires give you the works in advanced technologies — including **UNI-T®**. FYI auto tech heads: H-speed rated. UTQG 400 A A. Twenty-four sizes from 14″–17″.

How cool is that!

FUZION™

thefuzionzone.com

DIGITAL MUSIC GUIDE 04.05

TECH SUPPORT

BLENDER UPGRADES THE LISTENING AND VIEWING PLEASURE OF THREE LUCKY READERS BY GIVING THEM ALL THE LATEST DIGITAL GADGETS. YES, IT'S JUST LIKE *EXTREME MAKEOVER*—BUT WITH LESS SURGERY. PLUS: A USER'S GUIDE TO IMPOSSIBLY COOL AUDIOBLOGS.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEGO

MAKEOVER MADNESS!

HOME

LIFE IS FULL OF DISAPPOINTMENTS. BUT THAT TERRIBLE SCRATCHY NOISE COMING OUT OF YOUR SPEAKERS NEED NOT BE ONE OF THEM, THANKS TO THESE ULTRA-DESIRABLE HOME-ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS.

1

CHAD ERICKSON

24, FLASH AUDIO DESIGNER
MANCHESTER, CT

"I've had Mario since I was 12; I was a big Nintendo fan. It was in a box for a while but I took it out because I needed some music in my room. It has a radio, it's an alarm and it's fun-looking. But functionally speaking, it's awful."

ERICKSON: TIM SOTER; STILLS: ALPHONSE TELYMONDE

1 **DENON DP-500M**
Remember what those big black vinyl discs are for? You will, with this classic old-school turntable.
denon.com
$699

2 **MARANTZ DV6500**
State-of-the-art player capable of handling DVD-V, DVD-A, SACD, CD-R/-RW and hot toast.* (*Cannot handle hot toast.)
marantz.com
$649

3 **ELGATO EYETV 500**
Allows you to watch and record live TV on your Mac. Even in hi-def!
elgato.com
$349

4 **APPLE MAC MINI**
The most conveniently minute Mac to date with an appropriately petite price tag.
apple.com
$499

5 **B&W VM1**
You can mount these speakers vertically or horizontally—they kick butt either way.
bwspeakers.com
$200/ea

6 **B&W PV1**
The most stylish woofer this side of Lassie in an Armani suit.
bwspeakers.com
$1,500

7 **SENNHEISER RS65**
Enjoy surround-sound and velvety ear-cushion loveliness with these wireless headphones.
sennheiserusa.com
$209

8 **GRIFFIN RADIOSHARK**
Records FM radio to your computer—also looks like a shark's fin.
griffintechnology.com
$70

9 **LOGITECH HARMONY 676**
Control up to 15 different components with one ultimate remote.
logitech.com
$199

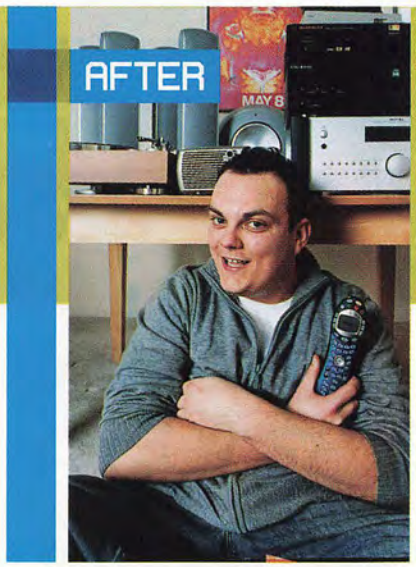
10 **INFOCUS SCREENPLAY 5000**
Video projector capable of expanding your favorite bass fishing show to a width of 11 feet.
infocus.com
$1,999

11 **ROTEL RSX-1056**
Play God—or any device you like—with this 7.1 channel surround sound device.
rotel.com
$1,299

12 **ESCIENT FIREBALL E2-300**
Massively memoried digital-music server.
escient.com
starts at $1,999

CHAD ERICKSON

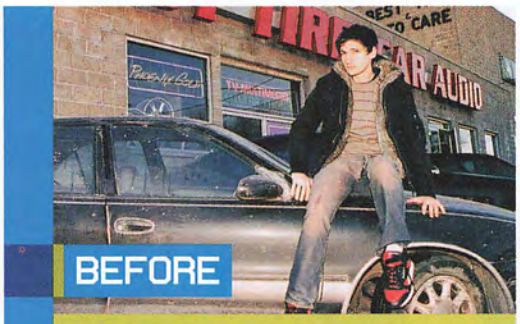
"Before I had a Super Mario Brother, and now I have Hal from *2001: A Space Odyssey*. I'm sad to see it go, but all this other stuff I got is awesome! Jenna Jameson 100" wide this weekend!"



MAKEOVER MADNESS!

CAR

WHAT'S THE POINT OF DRIVING IF YOU CAN'T BE SURROUNDED BY ALL THE LATEST IN AUDIOVISUAL TECHNOLOGY? THERE IS NONE. NONE AT ALL!



BEFORE

RUSSELL HELLER

25, FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER
NEW YORK CITY

"My 1994 Geo Prism had a nice audio system, which broke the day I bought it. Then I got an aftermarket cheapo deal that was later stolen. The speakers are blown out in the back, so you have to listen very frontally and kind of to one side, but it works."

HELLER: TIM SOTER; STILLS: ALPHONSE TELYMONDE; *BLADE RUNNER* COURTESY OF LADD COMPANY/WARNER BROS./THE KOBAL COLLECTION

1 **JENSEN VM9510**
Exchange that novelty bobblehead doll for this in-dash CD/DVD player and TV receiver.
audiovox.com
$799

2 **JL AUDIO E4300**
Let this amp give your power-hungry speakers what they crave—power.
jlaudio.com
$340

3 **SIRIUS STARMATE**
Compact satellite receiver with three-line display, 30 station presets and … channel toggle switch!
sirius.com
$130

4 **AUDIOVOX HEADREST LCD MONITOR AND DVD PLAYER**
Give your friends something to look at besides your inept driving skills.
audiovox.com
LCD $299/DVD $199

5 **PALMONE TUNGSTEN T5 WITH GPS**
Pair up this handheld organizer with a bluetooth GPS and never again hear the phrase "You're freaking lost, aren't you?"
palmone.com
T5 $399/GPS $299

6 **JL AUDIO VR650-CXI**
They say it's a "premium coaxial speaker." We say, "just crank it up."
jlaudio.com
$210/pr

7 **BELKIN TUNEBASE**
Links your iPod to your car stereo and thoughtfully charges it at the same time.
belkin.com
$80

8 **AUDIOVOX VOD1021**
Make your car's ceiling even more fascinating with this overhead LCD monitor.
audiovox.com
$1,099

9 **JL AUDIO 12W0**
Turns your car into a Metallica bass cabinet … but on wheels!
jlaudio.com
$140

DIGITAL MUSIC GUIDE 04.05

RUSSELL HELLER

"My 92-year-old grandmother has been practically deaf since I was born, and with this car and its bass capabilities, I can now share with her the joys of hip-hop. Amazing!"

SPECIAL THANKS TO BEST TIRE AND CAR AUDIO (516-482-1060, BESTTIRE.COM) FOR CUSTOM INSTALLATION

JULIEANNE SPECIALE

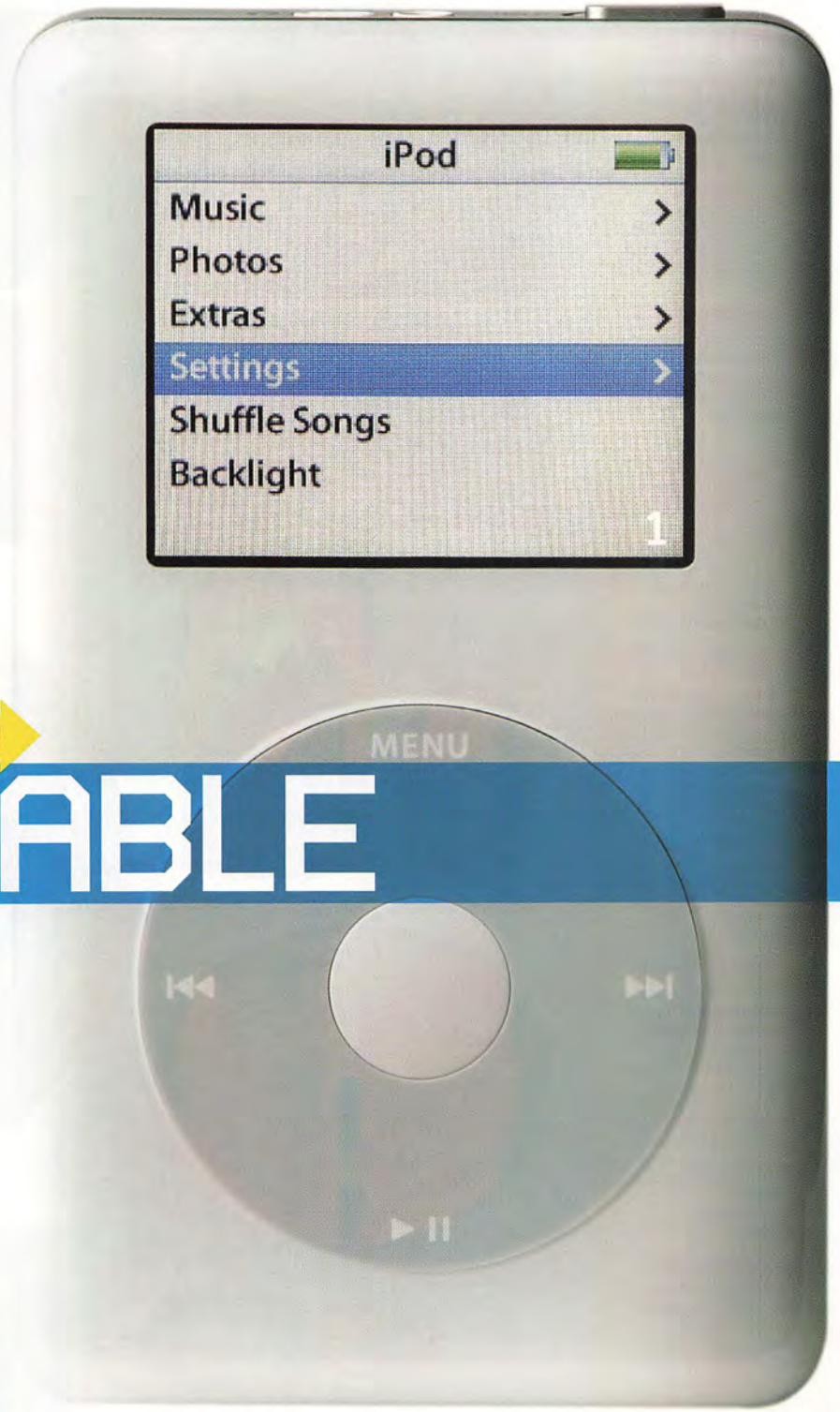
33, SOFTWARE CONSULTANT
NEW YORK CITY

"My boombox is 15 years old. In order to play a CD I have to pile at least three CDs on top of one another to weigh it down."

MAKEOVER MADNESS!

PORTABLE

ELEVEN WAYS TO TURN THAT WALK DOWN THE ROAD TO BUY MILK INTO AN ADVENTURE ... IN SOUND!



SPECIALE: TIM SOTER; STILLS: ALPHONSE TELYMONDE; *2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY* COURTESY OF MGM/THE KOBAL COLLECTION

1 **APPLE IPOD PHOTO**
How can this little box contain 15,000 songs or 25,000 photos? Not a clue.
apple.com
$499

2 **DELPHI XM MYFI**
Combine the joy of listening to XM radio with the thrill of being able to walk upright thanks to the first XM2go receiver.
xmradio.com
$350

3 **XTREMEMAC XTREMITY IPOD CASE**
Protect your iPod from the evils of what is known as "the outside world."
xtrememac.com
$30

4 **BOSE SOUNDDOCK**
Simply pop in your iPod and give your headphones the rest of the day off. Lucky old headphones.
bose.com
$299

5 **IRIVER PMC-120**
Store 20GB of TV shows, music, photos and porn on this handheld media player.
iriver.com
$500

6 **GRIFFIN AIRCLICK**
Touching your iPod is so 2004. Use this RF based remote to control it … even through walls!
griffintechnology.com
$40

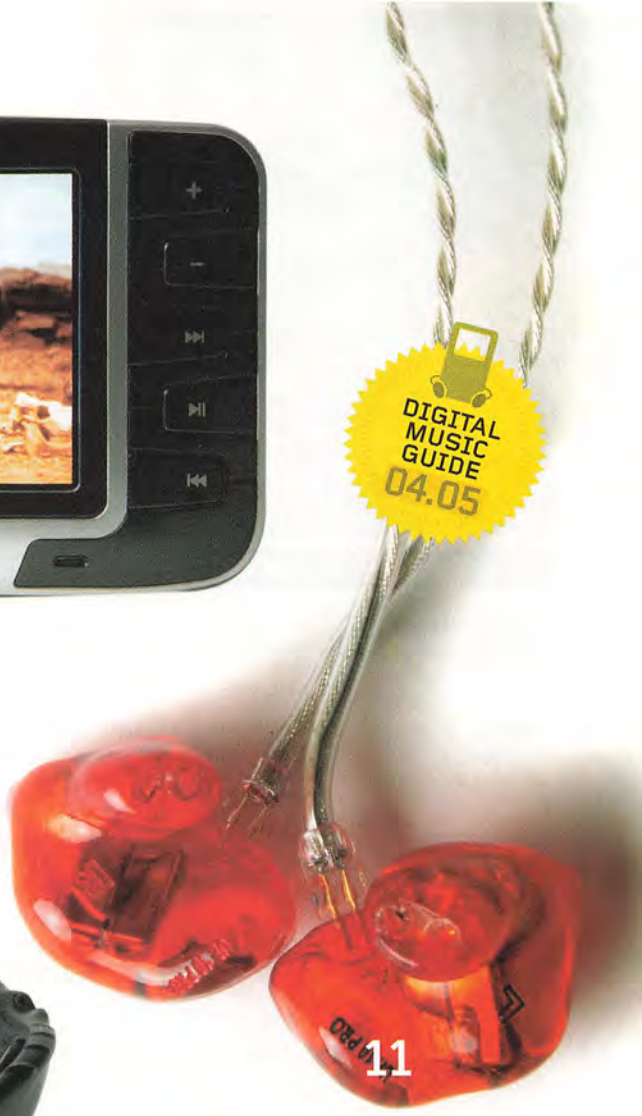
7 **OAKLEY THUMP**
Stylish—and Lil Jon–approved!—digital music eyewear.
oakley.com
$395

8 **XTREMEMAC SPORTWRAP**
Jog, work out or battle Skeletor while keeping your iPod safe in this moisture-resistant armband.
xtrememac.com
$30

9 **BELKIN DIGITAL CAMERA LINK**
Allows you to store photos on your iPod, freeing up memory on your digital camera for your celebrity-stalking adventures.
belkin.com
$50

10 **MEMOREX TRAVELDRIVE**
Is it Memorex or is it live? Actually, it's a portable USB hard disk. Like, duh.
memorex.com
Starts at $30

11 **ULTIMATE EARS UE-5C**
Great earphones molded specifically for your ears—and you've got *nice* ears.
ultimateears.com
$550



AFTER

JULIEANNE SPECIALE

"I'm going to be surrounded by audio and video all day, every day. And since I work with a bunch of tech guys, everyone is going to be so jealous. I keep waiting for someone to come back and take it all away—but it's mine!"

HOW TO **TRACK DOWN THE SONGS** YOU NEVER KNEW YOU WANTED!

AUDIOBLOGS

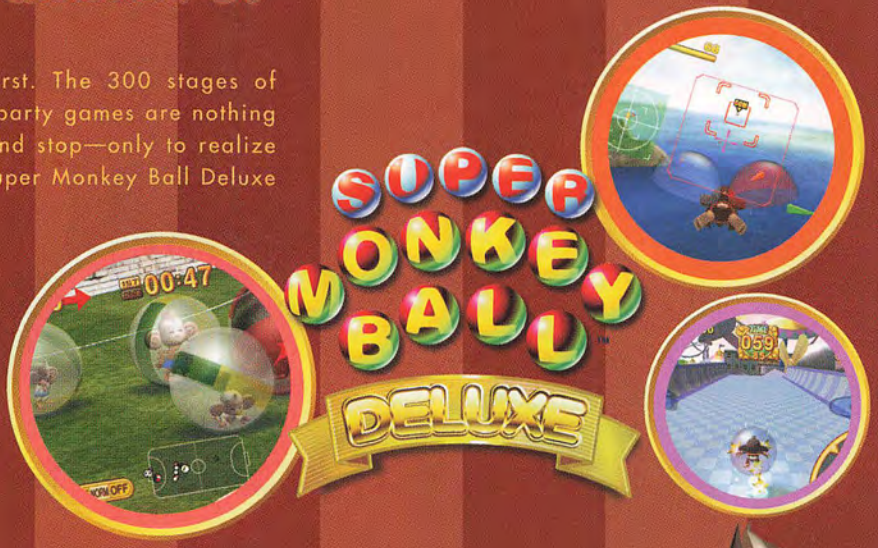
Whether you like obscure punk rock, vintage gospel or Norwegian jazz—and who doesn't like Norwegian jazz?—there is now an audioblog that covers it. In detail. With FREE MP3s! But which of these Web sites is really worth bookmarking? *Blender* stops watching *Date My Mom* long enough to compile this ranked list of 13 BRUISINGLY HIP AUDIOBLOGS. Enjoy! Or, as they say in Norwegian jazz clubs, "*Nyt dem*!" DOUGLAS WOLK

	THE TUNES	PRESENTATION	HOW OBSCURE?	SAMPLE TRACK	OVERALL SCORE
THE TOFU HUT TOFUHUT.BLOGSPOT.COM	An insanely all-over-the-place mix, with the Internet's largest roll call of other MP3 blogs. 8	Links galore, group discussions and apropos-of-nothing pictures. 10	Eccentric and very broad tastes. 9	The Raymond Scott Quintette, "In an Eighteenth-Century Drawing Room"	27
'BUKED & SCORNED BUKED.BLOGSPOT.COM	'Zine vet Mike McGonigal presents his favorite rarities, about half of them vintage gospel. 10	Brief, personal takes on every song. 6	Ranges from impossibly rare to totally unreleased. 10	Dorothy Love Coates, "There's a God Somewhere"	26
SOUL SIDES SOUL-SIDES.COM	Bay Area hip-hop critic Oliver Wang digs up lost treasures of '60s and '70s soul. 9	Witty liner-note-style descriptions. 8	Does he have every soul record ever? Probably. 9	Ben E. King, "Don't Let Me Down"	26
THE MYSTICAL BEAST MYSTICALBEAST.BLOGSPOT.COM	An enthusiastic history of little-heard music, especially crazy glam rock and '80s indie curiosities. 8	A ton of research into every artist's history. 9	Like someone who keeps saying, "Ah, but have you heard this?" 8	Skyband, "Pie in the Sky"	25
FLUXBLOG FLUXBLOG.ORG	DJ Matthew Perpetua is an indie-pop tastemaker, posting treats from not-yet-released records. 9	Extensive, nicely written notes. 7	Every *Pitchfork* reader owns this stuff … six months later. 8	Stephen Malkmus, "Civilized Satanist"	24
THE SUBURBS ARE KILLING US CHRISTOPHERPORTER.COM	Critic Christopher Porter has ears for Norwegian jazz, Congolese rock and old Jamaican ska. 8	Entertaining storytelling and more links than anyone could follow. 8	Fascinating stuff from all over the world. 8	Konono No. 1, "Ditshe Tshiekutala"	24
COCAINE BLUNTS & HIP-HOP TAPES COCAINEBLUNTS.COM	Hip-hop obscurities, especially early-'90s jams. 6	A collector's perspective, with discographical details and photos. 7	Virtually everything is way out of print. 9	Lady of Rage, "Afro Puffs (Extended Remix)"	22
VINYL MINE VINYLJOURNEY.BLOGSPOT.COM	Jim H. converts his immense collection of old vinyl—particularly punk and indie—to MP3s. 7	Thoughtful analysis and lots of personal anecdotes; he saw almost all of these bands play. 8	Unless you're a 40-year-old ex-punk, you've never heard most of this. 7	Green River, "Porkfist"	22
BENN LOXO DU TACCU MATTGY.NET/MUSIC	Matt Yanchyshyn, an AP reporter in West Africa, focuses on African music old and new. 8	Little pictures and short summaries of each performer's history. 6	Most of these songs are available on CD somewhere. 7	Alemayehu Eshete, "Teredtchewalehu"	21
SPOILT VICTORIAN CHILD SPOILTVICTORIANCHILD.BLOGSPOT.COM	A team inspired by late DJ John Peel posts a mix of up-and-coming ruffians and British-indie classics. 7	Brief descriptions of everything, plus links to band sites and Amazon for most songs. 7	This site mostly sticks to old favorites and new novelties. 5	Mercury Rev, "Chasing a Bee"	19
THE STYPOD STYLUSMAGAZINE.COM/IPOD	*Stylus* magazine's blog features three songs picked by a different guest curator every weekday. 7	It varies every day, but the where-to-buy links are welcome. 6	The concept is whatever's on the curators' iPods, famous or not. 6	Autistic Daughters, "A Box Full of Birds"	19
BUMROCKS BUMROCKS.COM	A mysterious, updated-daily string of killer MP3s, each free-associatively connected to the next. 9	No context, no pictures, no nothing, just titles and artist names. 1	You never have any idea what's coming next. 8	Inflatable Boy Clams, "I'm Sorry"	18
GABBA > POD GABBA.CC/POD	Bleeding-edge grime, dancehall, bubblecrunk and techno, plus old avant-pop favorites. 8	One or two sentences about each song, and a baffling interface. 2	Lots of hard-to-come-by mixes and white-labels. 7	Jagwa, "Inna the Streets (Bubble Up Riddim)"	17

TIME & LIFE PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES

"A" is for addictive.

Sure, it seems harmless enough at first. The 300 stages of gameplay are swell. And the 12 crazy party games are nothing less than nifty. Until, that is, you try and stop—only to realize you're a hopeless monkey junkie. It's Super Monkey Ball Deluxe and it's anything but kid stuff.



www.mybigball.com

EVERYONE
E
Violence
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

PlayStation.2

XBOX

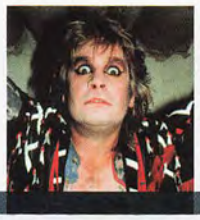
SEGA

©SEGA 2005. SEGA is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark office. SEGA, the SEGA logo and Super Monkey Ball are either registered trademarks or trademarks of SEGA Corporation. All rights reserved."PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

COUNTRY OF SWEDEN
ABSOLUT
ABSOLUT®
Country of Sweden
RASPBERRI
Feel the intense burst of
natural Raspberry, blended with
vodka distilled from grain grown
in the rich fields of southern Sweden.
The distilling and flavoring of vodka
is an age-old Swedish tradition
dating back more than 400
Vodka has been sold under th
Absolut since 1879
LC./VOL. (80 PROOF) 1 LITE
IMPORTED
BERRY FLAVORED VODKA
AND BOTTLED IN ÅHUS, SWEDEN
S VIN&SPRIT AB (PUBL)
♡MAYA
HAYUK
ABSOLUT RELEASE.
UNLEASH THE RASPBERRY.
ABSOLUT® RASPBERRI. RASPBERRY FLAVORED VODKA. PRODUCT OF SWEDEN. 40% ALC/VOL (80 PROOF). ABSOLUT, ABSOLUT RASPBERRI COUNTRY OF SWEDEN & LOGO, ENJOY WITH ABSOLUT RESPONSIBILITY AND
ABSOLUT BOTTLE DESIGN ARE TRADEMARKS OR REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OWNED BY V&S VIN & SPRIT AB. ©2005 V&S VIN & SPRIT AB. IMPORTED BY ABSOLUT SPIRITS CO., NEW YORK, NY.
ARTWORK BY MAYA HAYUK. PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE BRONSTEIN. ENJOY WITH ABSOLUT RESPONSIBILITY™
www.absolut.com

110
MARS VOLTA
This Texas sextet boasts even more talent than afro—and they've got loads of afro.
★★★★

118
THE GAME
50 Cent and Dr. Dre unveil their newest homey: bullet-riddled, gruff and obsessed with the dead.
★★★★



130
OZZY OSBOURNE
A career-spanning box set—including new material—for the crazy train–riding, bat-biting father of five.
★★★

THE GUIDE

THEY MAKE 'EM. WE REVIEW 'EM

NEW RELEASES 110
CHART 128
REISSUES 130
BACK CATALOGUE 138
LIVE! 140
BOOKS 142
MOVIES 142
DVDS 144
GAMES 146

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

Got the munchies? These California desert dudes are back for another stoner-rock blowout.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SEBASTIAN ARTZ; JONATHAN MANNION; NEAL PRESTON/RETNA LTD.; CHAPMAN BAEHLER

Mars Volta singer Cedric Bixler-Zavala and guitarist Omar Rodriguez-Lopez transmit from a rooftop.

HOW SUITE IT IS

With long, complex songs, ambitious hard-rockers prove: Pretention can rock!

SEBASTIAN ARTEAGA/UNIVERSAL MUSIC; OPPOSITE PAGE: STING AT THE LEOPARD LOUNGE, LAS VEGAS; FOUNTAIN: BRIGHT TARA/NICHOLLS WIRE MADE.COM

MARS VOLTA
FRANCES THE MUTE

★★★★

GSL/STRUMMER/UNIVERSAL

IN 1998, JUST as At the Drive-In singer Cedric Bixler-Zavala and guitarist Omar Rodriguez-Lopez were quitting their day jobs in El Paso, Texas, the Yes song "Heart of the Sunrise" showed up in a trailer for Vincent Gallo's film *Buffalo 66*. And oddly, all its early-'70s excesses sounded legit: the long-division time signatures, the octopus drum parts, all the grandiose hallmarks of progressive rock. It reminded you that speed, technique, precision and composition can still bite the nervous system, can give you the shove and shock that says *listen to me now.*

IT'S A NERVE-JANGLING EXPLOSION IN A DRUM FACTORY.

Punk tried to wipe away all that: After the Ramones, the rock underground shunned the clinician, the fiddly-widdly music student; he became a pariah figure, derisively nicknamed "muso." But speed and structure have been part of Western music for a lot longer than ripped T-shirts. The punk reaction against rock suites was a general reaction against hippies. And prog rockers—obsessive, detail-oriented—were hippie misfits. In the past few years, prog has streamed back into rock, from the metal of Dillinger Escape Plan and System of a Down to Radiohead's electronic symphonies to the dozens of varied jam bands that fill the fields of Bonnaroo every summer.

Mars Volta say they don't want you to think about Yes, or prog rock, when you hear *Frances the Mute*. But moments of Rush and Yes and ELO are all up in this second album's strident, pompous drama, and in Bixler-Zavala's high, vibrato-filled voice. (It is not at all in Rodriguez-Lopez's guitar playing, which breaks into ringing, atonal lines.) The band, overall, is into speed and exactitude and impact, and this is a visceral, powerful muso's record, a nerve-jangling explosion in a drum clinic.

Ably produced by Rodriguez-Lopez, if without the sensurround feeling of Rick Rubin's production on the band's debut, *De-Loused in the Comatorium*, it's an album rendered as a suite: three long, multipart pieces and two shorter stand-alones, each about five minutes long. An album whose English and Spanish lyrics (about the search for biological parents) were inspired by a diary found in the back of a car by a now-deceased band member who worked as a repo man.

Which is not the kind of subject matter that would've interested Yes. Mars Volta's songwriters took what they liked from a virtuosic tradition, discarded the silly piping-in-a-glen and mountains-come-out-of-the-sky, roughed it up through a mordant sensibility and added ambient scraping, static and salsa piano solos. *Frances the Mute* is heaping proof of their ambition, a heavily detailed, high-impact serving of something genuinely new.

There are a small number of yowled references supporting the stated theme—"Separating the mother from child," "Mothers and feathers start to drown the living proof," "*Una historia sin mi madre.*" But the lyrics, like those on *De-Loused*, are largely incoherent clinical-science gloom-poems with surreal nightmare imagery; they seem more in tune with the film and videos of Nine Inch Nails collaborator David Fincher.

At the Drive-In seemed, from the outward signs (flags draped over amps, MC5 hairdos), to have revolutionary political content. But there was no trackable message there, just spasmodic garage-punk gestures and gold-plated certainty. Certainty, still, is what you're whistling when you finish listening to Mars Volta. There's a confidence, not just in the sound of their own group—which has swelled to six members, including two guitars, percussion and keyboards—but also in the way they gild their own lily, with extra musicians playing bits of strings, and some unfortunately inept trumpet improvisation. In one portion of "L'Via L'Viaquez," the album's standout track, there's even a slow Latin vamp and an excellent, collapsing, somersaulting solo played by '70s-era salsa pianist Larry Harlow. On top of it all is the oddity of Bixler-Zavala's voice, as full-throated as Bono's, as maudlin as Robert Smith's of the Cure, as high as Jon Anderson's of Yes.

These sons of the '70s remain unafraid of pretension. Long, drippy ambient sequences segment the record. There is an entire minute of bird chirping at the beginning of the suite called "Miranda, That Ghost Just Isn't Holy Anymore," followed by nearly three minutes of mystery noise and Cedric-wail, the sub-part of the suite-within-the-suite entitled "Vade Mecum." And for the two minutes that end "The Widow"—which itself is just (*just!*) a six-minute song—there are only wheezing synth tones and a bubbly cumulus you could make at home with a digital-delay pedal.

Despite mountains of lyrics, this is not a word band. It's a sound band—the sound of almost randomly foregrounded phrases like "Exoskeletal junction at the railroad delayed," from the last album, or "Who do you trust?" from this one. It's a whoosh band, a vroom band, a rush band. And maybe, a little bit, a Rush band.

BEN RATLIFF

DOWNLOAD: "The Widow," "L'Via L'Viaquez"

THE 4 MOST PRETENTIOUS ALBUMS OF ALL TIME

YES
TALES FROM TOPOGRAPHIC OCEANS
RHINO, 1973
Stultifying concept album about ancient scriptures, the lost treasures of Atlantis, etc. Arranged into four suites, since LP sides could hold only 20 minutes or so of horseshit.

MAGMA
MEKANIK DESTRUKIW KOMMANDOH
PHANTOM, 1974
Ludicrous concept album about a spiritualist inspired by aliens, sung in Kobaian, a language Christian Vander invented to communicate his deep philosophical thoughts.

LOU REED
METAL MACHINE MUSIC
BUDDHA, 1975
Agonizing concept album about fan abuse, with over an hour of thickly layered nails-on-blackboard feedback. Reed claimed that he'd never listened to it all the way through.

STING
THE SOUL CAGES
A&M, 1991
Gelatinous concept album about the son of a dying riveter who sails to the Island of Souls so he can save his father by drinking Death under the table. Presence of river metaphors is meant to indicate profundity.
DOUGLAS WOLK

THE SCORE »

- ✪✪✪✪✪ A CLASSIC
- ✪✪✪✪ GREAT
- ✪✪✪ GOOD
- ✪✪ MEDIOCRE
- ✪ FOUL

AESOP ROCK

FAST CARS, DANGER, FIRE AND KNIVES ✪✪✪

DEFINITIVE JUX

Piercing psychobabble about war and God from lanky New York MC

Aesop Rock is indie rap's great surrealist, a spewer and sneerer given to oblique code and artfully jumbled syntax. His voice is a bassy, agile instrument that rhymes "evil" gracefully with "amoeba," but he can go from dazzling to deadeningly dense over LP lengths, so this smaller dose is appealing. It's unclear what "cobra loading zone" means, but gripping themes emerge over these nasty digital funk beats. "Holy Smokes" couples an anti-church rant with a crisis of faith. Elsewhere, "Fast Cars" evokes the anger and fear of wartime America, jabbing at the military before offering some brilliantly paranoid foreign policy: "Located the key to world peace," Aesop raps. "Kill. Every. Motherfucker. But. Me." Maybe he's on to something …

JONAH WEINER

DOWNLOAD: "Fast Cars," "Zodiaccupuncture"

AIRBORN AUDIO

GOOD FORTUNE ✪✪✪

NINJA TUNE

Contorted sci-fi hip-hop from the ashes of Anti-Pop Consortium

Endorsed by Radiohead, the leftfield trio Anti-Pop Consortium were never exactly Nelly and the St. Lunatics, but the playfully idiosyncratic rapper Beans added a splash of color to the scowling obscurity of High Priest and M. Sayyid. With Beans gone solo, his fellow APC alumni now delve even deeper into dystopian gloom. For all their self-conscious intellect, the duo's dour, knotty rhymes are frequently either ordinary ("I've seen more drama than John Leguizamo") or meaningless ("I destroy the concept of linear time"). *Good Fortune*'s appeal rests entirely on its neurotically inventive beats: Analog synthesizers buzz like faulty streetlights, rhythms skip and stutter, ray guns zip and zoom. Like actor-directors who can't really act, Airborn Audio's movements and pictures are more eloquent than their words.

DORIAN LYNSKEY

DOWNLOAD: "Bright Lights"

Airborn Audio: Charismatic third member not pictured.

TORI AMOS

THE BEEKEEPER ✪✪

EPIC

Redheaded romantic's excursion into ambient piano-picking has no sting

Here at *Blender*, we wisely prefer unadulterated praise for Tori Amos, the universe's most cult-studded chanteuse and, after seven superb, labyrinthine, musically dressy and emotionally naked discs, deservedly so. So let's say album eight is experimental: an experiment in whether committed fans will put up with 70 minutes of ambient Toriosity. Mood ring set to gray, she dazes through

TOP: THEO JAMISON; BOTTOM: AUTUMN DE WILDE

OLD SCHOOL

The pimp-dork soul brother reclaims his genius songcraft

BECK

GUERO ✪✪✪✪

INTERSCOPE

AT THIS POINT, the collected works of Beck Hansen are probably due their own genre. Even a casual listener knows the sound of one man getting crazy with the Cheese Whiz: folkie-strum, '60s pop, '70s funk, old-school rap, Kraut-rock bleep and some foggy-mountain banjo on the break. But since cementing Becktronica on *Odelay* in 1996, he lost his exuberance. And after the samba sighs and country weepers of *Sea Change*, his 2002 breakup record, it seemed he'd slid into some fatal Brazilian malaise.

Now, reunited with *Odelay* producers the Dust Brothers, an older, doper Beck heads back to the dance floor. Revisiting his earlier, proto–Napoleon Dynamite persona, he reenters the honky-rap field and kicks "Hell Yes" ("Now I'm turning it on/I'm working my legs!" Look out, Usher). Unlike the sampledelic explosion of *Odelay*, *Guero* is like a focused essay with thematic consistency: the lyrics sound like a Beat poet mad-libbing on the CNN crawl, but soon coalesce into deft autobiographical impressionism.

That's most apparent on "Que Onda Guero"—rough translation: "Whassup, honky," a phrase we can assume Beck heard often in the East L.A. of his youth. When you've got snapshots like "cowboy DJ sleeping on the sidewalk in a Burger King crown," you don't have to front; you're basically Nas.

Guero bubbles with kooky sounds and melodic invention, but reaches its euphoric peak on "Girl"—an ecstasy tab of a pop song, and one of Beck's creepiest subversions. Coming on like a classic beach-girl rhapsody, it subtly turns louche and macabre, twisting an apparent serial-killer reverie into what might be the cruising song of the summer. Spanglish lyrics, murder, car jams —welcome back the oddest L.A. folkie since Snoop Dogg.

CHRIS NORRIS

DOWNLOAD: "Girl," "Hell Yes"

Beck: "Now, where'd I leave my giant piña colada?"

Tori Amos: "We're gonna need bigger flypaper."

The Bravery: Fully stocked on Head and Shoulders.

19 songs of layered keys and lacquered vocals, semisweetly and sans dynamic, punctuated by phrases that threaten self-parody ("the power of orange knickers") or self-helpitudes unworthy of her usual lacerating insight ("the sexiest thing is trust"). If shards of symbolist vision and baroque virtuosity remain, they're smoothed out on the beekeeping tip, avoiding any sharp stings, leaving barely a spoonful of honey.

RENE VIENET

DOWNLOAD: "Marys of the Sea"

BRENDAN BENSON

ALTERNATIVE TO LOVE ✪✪✪

V2

Third album from Detroit pop-rocker and friend of Jack White is a tribute to a dreamy past

It's no mean feat to sound casual and meticulous at the same time, but that's Brendan Benson's great gift: He's an offhanded but dazzlingly sincere romantic. He switches styles and moods nearly every song, but his caramel harmonies and swirling guitars are reliable constants. And although rock's past, particularly '60s pop, is his dress-up box, he never crosses the line into mimicry. The shivery declaration of love "Pledge of Allegiance" conjures dreams of Phil Spector and the Ronettes: "I didn't sign up for anything like this/I always wind up screwed without a kiss." It's the sound of a lonely, lovesick boy, parked with his girl on some Lover's Lane of the imagination, and Benson makes it feel as close as your radio dial—even in a world where radio dials no longer exist.

STEPHANIE ZACHAREK

DOWNLOAD: "Spit It Out," "Pledge of Allegiance"

BLOC PARTY

SILENT ALARM ✪✪✪

VICE

British punkers attempt a revival—of 2004!

This year's foppish next big things sound a lot like … last year's. With their glass-shard guitars and panic-attack rhythm section, this multiracial London quartet unavoidably evoke onetime tourmates Franz Ferdinand—albeit without the seduce-and-abandon killer instinct. (A few roiling ballads suggest Interpol, whom they've also toured with.) Occasional flashes of brilliance transcend the déjà-vu pastiche: "Banquet" is a pogo anthem worthy of peak-form Blur, and "She's Hearing Voices" is a suitably harrowing sequel to Joy Division's maddened "She's Lost Control." Kele Okereke's distressed yelps and Matt Tong's merciless drumming set them apart from the pack of neo–New Wave contenders—if they come up with a less derivative manifesto next time, they could swing more voters their way.

DENNIS LIM

DOWNLOAD: "Banquet," "She's Hearing Voices"

THE BRAVERY

THE BRAVERY ✪✪✪

ISLAND

Killer synth-rock debut cost just $7,000 to make, will quickly recoup

Clad in goth black and liberally mascara'd, this New York five-piece couldn't be more of-the-moment if they tried. However, it's one thing to imagine a meld of the Strokes and the Killers, and quite another to pull off this seamless alliance of pretty synth melody and fierce guitar lines, and lace your debut album with at least seven simple, unignorable pop songs. Singer Sam Endicott's Morrissey glower and lazy Julian Casablancas pipes speak of the pain of being different from all the other boys ("The best time I ever had—waiting around for something bad"), the song titles ("Tyrant," "Swollen Summer") hint at taboo horseplay and the chilly, urgent music steals your lunch money. This is dramatic, radio-loving rock primed to outlive the current *I ♥ the '80s* infatuation.

TONY POWER

DOWNLOAD: "An Honest Mistake," "Give In," "PSA"

ASTONISHING FACT!

THE DECEMBERISTS' Colin Meloy had a one-line appearance in the TV miniseries *Return to Lonesome Dove*.

THE DECEMBERISTS

PICARESQUE ✪✪✪✪

KILL ROCK STARS

Recording in a church and day-care center, Portland quintet makes music for smart kiddies

It's easy to become one of the "unclassifiable" alt-rock bands wowing college kids from Montreal to Portland, Oregon: Play some non-rock instruments, have at least one female member and write with a volume of fairy tales at your elbow. The Decemberists epitomize the trend and, despite songwriter Colin Meloy's risky fondness for arcane phrases like "all the day," the group's third magical-realist outing gleams with emotion. Meloy's oratorical singing insists that this is Lit as well as Pop; he'd rather be lumped in with Jonathan Lethem than the Arcade Fire. Luckily he earns his writer's stripes. Worn themes like class-inappropriate romance or filial revenge aren't exactly made new, but believable characters and sticky melodies distinguish them. At first, *Picaresque* seems like a precious little pudding, but spend some time and you'll find meat within.

ANN POWERS

DOWNLOAD: "The Infanta," "Eli the Barrow Boy," "The Mariner"

DIAMOND NIGHTS

ONCE WE WERE DIAMONDS ✪✪✪✪

KEMADO

America's answer to the Darkness make a trashy valentine to the '80s

There's a thin line between inspiration and imitation, and in channeling Rick Springfield and Europe, NYC quartet Diamond Nights have gleefully snorted it up. The band's first disc, a five-song EP, is pop-rock at its tautest, hookiest and most playful. "The Girl's Attractive" could be a *VH1 Classics* time capsule, with its neat, mannered drive and glittery synth flourishes. Morgan Phalen's blasé, libidinous vocals, punctuated with extravagant sighs, are deadpan but unabashedly compelling. His falsetto come-ons give "Destination Diamonds," powered by impeccable cock-rock riffs and big drum fills, its distinct effervescence, and his yowl nicely musses the hair-metal chorus of party ode "Saturday Fantastic." Songs like these are why people start cover bands.

NICK CATUCCI

DOWNLOAD: "Destination Diamonds," "The Girl's Attractive"

DOVES

SOME CITIES ✪✪✪

CAPITOL

Yearning, sprawling rock with ridiculous lyrics: The British answer to emo

Doves were a pop-dance act called Sub Sub until a studio fire on the birthday of twins Andy and Jez Williams destroyed their equipment and their next album. Taking the cosmic hint, they regrouped as horny-handed indie rockers, becoming protégés of Manchester homeboys New Order. Like their patrons, Doves make epic, emotional rock for lads who dislike showing their feelings. Jimi Goodwin sings throatily of freedom from self-doubt, grubby Northern towns and dead-end relationships, but his voice is just another component in Doves' exultant escape-rock. Though this third album doesn't reinvent their blueprint—the rowdy playing of delicate melodies—there's a good-time sensibility here that most Brit-rock lacks. Doves' best songs are full of life and genuinely moving, like an older, wiser Coldplay.

ANDREW HARRISON

DOWNLOAD: "Some Cities," "Snowden," "The Storm,"

CONTINUED ON P. 116

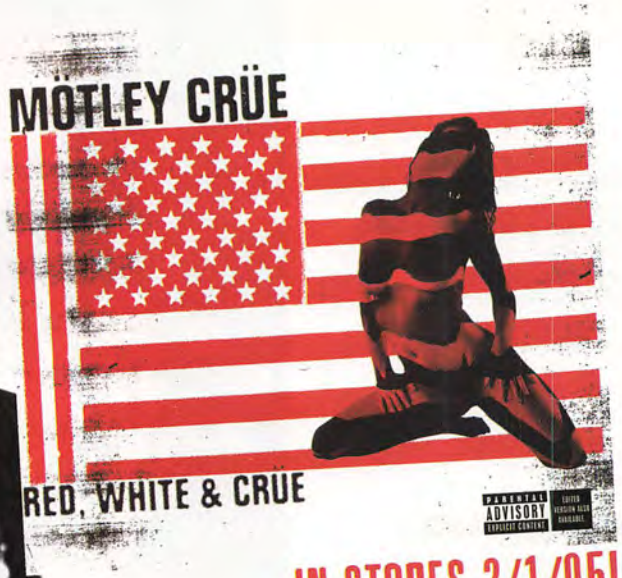
I LOVE THIS CD!

AMY BRENNEMAN
ACTRESS, *JUDGING AMY*

BOB SCHNEIDER
I'M GOOD NOW
VANGUARD

"I'm crazy about that album right now. It's mellow singer-songwriter rock with a touch of country, and he writes very poetic lyrics."

BRENNEMAN: JEFF VESPA/WIREIMAGE.COM



IN STORES 2/1/05!

THE WORLDS MOST INFAMOUS ROCK BAND

37 MÖTLEY CRÜE CLASSICS INCLUDING "DR. FEELGOOD," "WITHOUT YOU," "HOME SWEET HOME" AND "GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS"

THE WORLDWIDE REUNION TOUR MARKS THE RETURN OF THE FOUR ORIGINAL BAND MEMBERS:

VINCE NEIL NIKKI SIXX TOMMY LEE MICK MARS

Check Motley.com For Tour Dates Includes 3 BRAND New Songs!

ALSO AVAILABLE

HIP-O RECORDS WWW.HIP-O.COM
A UNIVERSAL MUSIC COMPANY

Motley Records

NEW LOW PRICE

AVAILABLE AT f.y.e. for your entertainment music • movies • games • more

© 2005 Universal Music Enterprises, a Division of UMG Recordings, Inc.

THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED NEW ALBUM FROM BECK

"Totally amazing... as cool and grooving as anything from Odelay... He sounds inspired, reinventing himself on every track" -NY Times

★★★★★ Album Of The Month -MAXIM

Guero

Featuring E-Pro

IN STORES MARCH 29

AVAILABLE AT

BEST BUY

Thousands of Possibilities GET YOURS

www.beck.com
www.interscope.com

℗©2005 Interscope Records. All rights reserved.

Daft Punk: "My balls are rusty."

WE, ROBOT

French duo love their synthesizers ... a bit too much

DAFT PUNK

HUMAN AFTER ALL ✪✪✪

VIRGIN

FOR EVERY GREAT band there's a moment of optimum ripeness, when they deserve to conquer the world. Daft Punk reached it with 2001's *Discovery*, in which they deliciously wove elements of '70s soft rock into European disco beats. The result was beauties like "One More Time" (electronica's "More Than a Feeling," a hymn to the power of music) and "Digital Love" (this decade's most poignant love song so far).

Discovery alchemized schlocky sources (ELO, Supertramp, Van Halen) to achieve a splendor of sound that felt almost religious. But everything that was burstingly ecstatic on that album has been replaced on the follow-up by archly ironic dance-rock that feels desultory and numb, verging on autistic.

This time, the endless vocoderized man-machine vocals feel as fresh as a post–*Comes Alive* Peter Frampton album. The clipped and clinical-sounding guitar riffs distill the air-punching aggression of a thousand sports-stadium anthems and the four-square beats are about as funky as the Scorpions. When Thomas Bangalter and Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo (the best name in rock—or at least the best in French rock) come up with a great lick—"Robot Rock," "Television Rules the Nation"—they don't go anywhere with it, instead wearing it out through deadening reiteration.

On the plus side, every track contains a couple of cool sounds (often strange metallic gurgles, like a cyborg with indigestion). "Steam Machine" is so plodding that its ugliness becomes strangely compelling. And "Technologic" cleverly replicates the neurotic restlessness of the computer age with its looped vocal: "Plug it, play it, burn it, rip it, drag and drop it, zip-unzip it."

Revealingly, though, the most endearing track is the least robot-rockin'. With its mellow piano and idyllic guitar-picking conjuring a sensuality tinged with melancholy, "Make Love" could almost be a Bruce Hornsby loop. It's the only time this album really approaches the bittersweet bliss of its predecessor. Sadly, most of the time, *Human After All* is the proverbial diminished return.

SIMON REYNOLDS

DOWNLOAD: "Make Love," "Steam Machine," "Technologic"

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE!

GIORGIO MORODER
FROM HERE TO ETERNITY *REPERTOIRE*

AIR
MOON SAFARI *CAROLINE*

KATHLEEN EDWARDS

BACK TO ME ✪✪✪

ZOË/ROUNDER

Canadian folkie defies folkie cliché by swearing, liking sex

Someone has to be the next Lucinda Williams, the new Dylan of the No Depression set. It seemed within reach for Kathleen Edwards, whose bittersweet cocktail of a debut, *Failer*, left one thirsty for more. Yet the more her follow-up slugs Williams's bourbon 'n' romance on the rocks (like "Away" and "Independent Thief"), the drier it gets. As other mixers creep in—a dash of angelic directness, a dram of mysterious distance—it gets better, from the slow-burning melancholy of "Pink Emerson Radio" to the oblique jangles of "What Are You Waiting For." When she shakes it up just right on the sinister libido-rocker "Back to Me," she sounds familiar and like no one else, the next Kathleen Edwards, drinking with herself.

RENE VIENET

DOWNLOAD: "What Are You Waiting For," "Back to Me"

ERASURE

NIGHTBIRD ✪✪✪

MUTE

British synth duo trade their queer-eye verve for sleepy reflections on mid-life

During their early-'90s heyday, Erasure were masters of the three-minute synth-pop single, trading in fizzy, flamboyant tunes as sticky and sweet as meth-infused cotton candy. But after getting serious on their 1995 self-titled album—a moody attempt to ape longtime rivals the Pet Shop Boys—keyboard wizard Vince Clarke and emotive crooner Andy Bell have shunned buoyancy. The duo's first original U.S. disc since 1997's *Cowboy* favors sedate commitment-ceremony ballads instead of fizzy gay-bar anthems. With his cutting falsetto vocals, Bell remains an impressive stylist—and candidate for a Broadway revue in 2010—while Clarke's icy synths are back in vogue, thanks to the Postal Service and the Faint. Still, one can't help but miss Erasure's old-school glee.

ROSS RAIHALA

DOWNLOAD: "Let's Take One More Rocket to the Moon," "Breathe"

I LOVE THIS CD!

KYRA SEDGWICK
ACTRESS, *THE WOODSMAN*

K.D. LANG
HYMNS OF THE 49TH PARALLEL
NONESUCH

"She has such an unbelievable voice. And she does covers of really unlikely songs and makes them sound like she wrote them herself."

FANNYPACK

SEE YOU NEXT TUESDAY ✪✪✪✪

TOMMY BOY

With songs written by two guys and sung by three girls, NYC group are as coy as they are smart

Conceptualizers Matt Goias and Fancy want *you* to think *they* think Fannypack are "intensely stupid." Don't believe it. They know Fannypack are a sophisticated trash-dance fantasy about NYC girls that's obligingly played out by three of them: downtown hipster Cat, Thai/Puerto Rican exotic Jessibel and mouthy young rapper Belinda. Their second album offers nothing as crudely irresistible as 2003's "Camel Toe." But the Brooklyn-celebrating "Seven One Eight" has kiddie-catchy potential, "On My Lap" kicks crunk stripper exploitations in the ass, "Keep On" slows it down a little—and there's more good stuff. Despite a short-circuited sequence of electroclash songs, the girls are winning throughout, and it's to the male svengalis' credit that their multicultural honeys have stuck with the program. Any NYC girl with a brain will be proud of them.

ROBERT CHRISTGAU

DOWNLOAD: "Seven One Eight," "Keep On," "Twisted"

50FOOTWAVE

GOLDEN OCEAN ✪✪✪

THROWING MUSIC

Former Throwing Muses singer gives the knobs a hard clockwise twist with unfortunately named band.

As alt-rock musicians get older, they're supposed to cool off and make relaxed, subtle, quiet records. Throwing Muses' Kristin Hersh has done that already, and now she's apparently decided that cranking it up to indiscriminate volumes and screaming her throat into hamburger is a better new direction. *Golden Ocean* (reprising three songs from her new band's 2004 EP) is the loudest record she has ever made, and even if few individual compositions leap out of the general roar, it sounds fantastic. The trio (including Muses bassist Bernard Georges) borrow rhythmic tricks and razor-on-flesh guitar tones from their old Boston scenemates the Pixies, and Hersh howls "You know what? Shut the fuck up!" as if she's been waiting to for decades.

DOUGLAS WOLK

DOWNLOAD: "Long Painting," "El Dorado"

DAFT PUNK: SEB JANIAK; SEDGWICK: JIM SPELLMAN/WIREIMAGE.COM

Fannypack, hard at work blinding you.

Mary Gauthier throws one hell of a tailgate party.

LEFT TO RIGHT: SENOR MCGUIRE; BROOKE NIPAR

FISCHERSPOONER

ODYSSEY ✪

CAPITOL

11-song set from campy New York–based synth-pop duo chokes on its own feather boa

Most one-hit wonders suffer no harsher fate than dwindling royalty checks and occasional VH1 mockery. Fischerspooner—ephemeral New York art-world stars whose one fantastic single, "Emerge," gave a cabaret makeover to '80s European beats—weren't so lucky. The backlash was almost instant: Their 2002 debut helped bankrupt a U.K. label foolish enough to give them a reported $3 million; their fashionista fan base rapidly recycled them into punch lines; and critics savaged them, including a one-star review in *Blender*. This follow-up (partly co-written by Pink collaborator Linda Perry) jettisons their saving grace—a big, glitter-streaked wink—for limp stabs at profundity: breathy Casey Spooner actually repeats, "I am just a cloud." Anything better than savaging would just encourage their tuneless farce.

JONAH WEINER

DOWNLOAD: None

MARY GAUTHIER

MERCY NOW ✪✪✪

LOST HIGHWAY

Louisiana singer fills her alt-country ballads with despairing romance

Mary Gauthier (pronounced "Go-shay") doesn't just sing the blues—she also declaims them, reciting her tales of hard times and loneliness like juke-joint poetry. When the 42-year-old former restaurateur plays it straight, as on the passionate, portentous "It Ain't the Wind," she winds up in territory familiar to fans of Lucinda Williams. But the best parts of her fourth album leave melodies implied in the cadences of her speech, allowing a careworn drawl to breath life into the stories as producer Gurf Morlix (who formerly worked with Williams) anchors the mood with deft splashes of banjo, cello or B-3. Reflecting all Gauthier's been through—heavy drinking, petty crime, bad luck and broken hearts—*Mercy Now* is good news for people who like songs about bad news.

J.D. CONSIDINE

DOWNLOAD: "Mercy Now," "Your Sister Cried"

INARA GEORGE

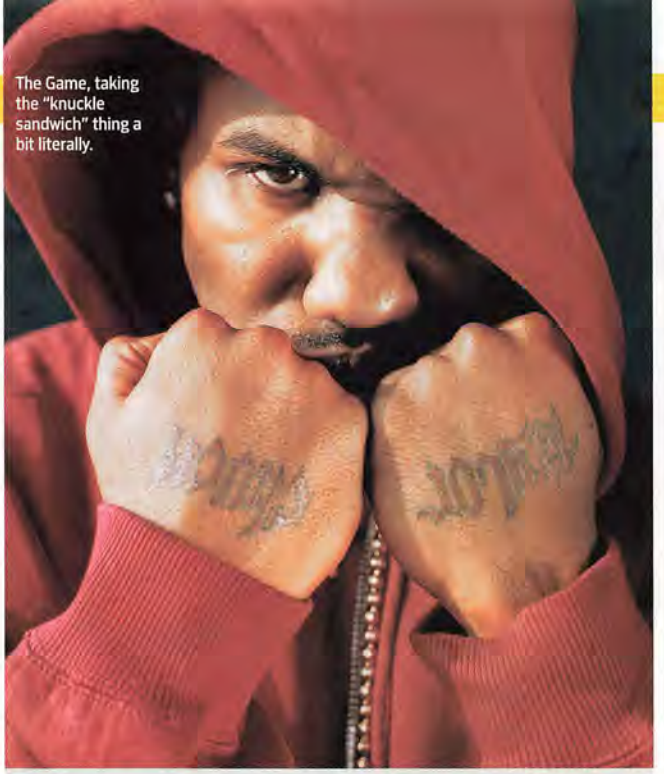
ALL RISE ✪✪✪

EVERLOVING

Topanga Canyon smarty gives her sound the big-screen treatment

Maybe it's the off chance of bumping into Aimee Mann at the Farmer's Market, but recently L.A. has proven highly inspirational to female singer-songwriters. Inara George is the latest, giving a carnival spin to the city's femme blend of confession and artifice. A rock scion-ess (her dad was Little Feat's funky chicken-man Lowell), George finds her match in Mike Andrews, composer of ➔

A is for Original
they MIGHT BE giants
Original Songs & Videos about the Alphabet
they MIGHT BE giants
HERE COME the ABCs
BRAND NEW! family CD and DVD
HERE COME THE ABCs
Original. Creative. Brilliant. Learn your ABCs or just enjoy the best refresher course imaginable!
Visit DisneySound.com for a complete song list, to hear music clips, see videos and more!
AVAILABLE AT amazon.com
B is for Instant Classic
Playhouse Disney
disney Sound


The Game, taking the "knuckle sandwich" thing a bit literally.

BIG HOOD

Dr. Dre–endorsed tough unveils "the rebirth of Compton"

THE GAME

THE DOCUMENTARY ✪✪✪✪

G-UNIT/AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE

WHEN DOES STREET cred turn into emotional baggage? The Game spent his childhood bouncing between foster homes, then witnessed his older brother's murder at age 14. He wasn't fatherless—but he says his father molested his two sisters. And in a 2001 firefight with rival drug dealers, he lost part of his chest, fell into a short coma and spent months recovering. His face, which looks like a boxer's, and his voice, which sounds like an exhaust pipe, bear scars. This man has enough cred to fuel a lifetime of therapy.

With this sordid backstory, an avalanche of street hype and the blessing of mentor Dr. Dre, Jayceon Taylor has been called the West Coast 50 Cent. But where 50 talks constantly about killing people, Game's obsessed with the dead. He hallucinates a conversation with Eazy-E and Jam Master Jay on the somber "Dreams." He eulogizes a childhood friend killed for his Barkley Nikes on "Hate It or Love it"—which coaxes some unusually moving autobiography from 50 too. And on "Start From Scratch" he slurs and wheezes his verses as though he's falling-down drunk, listing a lifetime of regrets. No gangsta since Scarface has sounded this haunted.

Still, his demons don't consume him. He has fun playing with puns and metaphors and gets off a joke at the expense of Tyra Banks's forehead. Comic and poignant, a line about Eazy-E's "jheri curls dripping on Ronald Reagan's shoe" stands among the best crack-era poetry. And for every wistful soul loop, there's a dazzling pyrotechnic assault courtesy of Dre (the endlessly crescendoing "Higher"), Just Blaze (the brassy blare of "Church for Thugs," which bucks like it's on hydraulics), Timbaland and others.

HE'S OBSESSED WITH THE DEAD.

The Documentary is like a hip-hop *Jurassic Park*: a big-budget homage to a place most of us thought was ancient history. Compton explodes from the amber here, and as the Game makes clear, it's still no theme park.

JONAH WEINER

DOWNLOAD: "Hate It or Love It," "Church for Thugs," "How We Do," "West Side Story"

soundtracks for weirdo hits like *Donnie Darko*. Her woodwind-like voice and lucid sensibility are hardly weird, but Andrews pushes her toward a dreamy and daring edge. Songs like "Mistress" splash lemon juice on princess daydreams, while a sun-drenched arrangement makes "Good to Me" the love song of early spring. This Tinseltown daughter has a vision, and with the help of the right crew, she's made it positively cinematic.

ANN POWERS

DOWNLOAD: "Good to Me," "Mistress," "Pull Things"

ADAM GREEN

GEMSTONES ✪✪

ROUGH TRADE

Jessica Simpson–dissing anti-folker wages battle against maturity. Sadly, he wins

He's no longer a kid, but this former Moldy Peach still follows his old band's credo: Saying "cock" is funny! Breaking from the orchestral gorgeousness of his 2003 hit "Jessica" (an oddball swipe at Mrs. Nick Lachey), Green's third solo disc prefers childish punch lines to fully realized melodies. Like an ADD teen anxiously flipping through porn magazines, he'll start with decent enough gags (his Dubya satire "Choke on a Cock") then lose them inside his flimsy, two-minute doodles. Except for the hypnotic "Country Road," Green's cutesy Bacharach-ish chamber pop loses all novelty after a few spins. Desperately attempting to seem clever, Green doesn't realize that he's just full of shtick.

TIM GRIERSON

DOWNLOAD: "Country Road"

AL GREEN

EVERYTHING'S OK ✪✪✪

BLUE NOTE

He is soul music's greatest living singer, and R&B's sexiest reverend

Turning to gospel music in the late '70s gave Al Green a way to sidestep his own shadow as soul music's greatest singer, but his 2003 return to R&B posed a challenge: how to update a timeless sound? Reunited with longtime producer Willie Mitchell, Green has answered the question by avoiding it. The pair's second effort this century digs 1973 from prehistoric ice: big horns, foxy backing vocals, honeyed syncopation and Green's supple voice, even if his smoothness is nicked now, at age 58. What makes this album slightly dry is its gorgeous conservatism—the band is loose and Green cooks, but there's not a ton of heat. Hearing one of the greatest voices ever bounce through classy new material (and one fine cover, a prayerful version of "You Are So Beautiful") comforts more than tantalizes. It's always great to hear the divine speak through Green, but this time God sounds a bit commonplace.

ANN POWERS

DOWNLOAD: "Build Me Up," "Magic Road"

THE HOLY GHOST

WELCOME TO IGNORE US ✪✪✪

CLEARLY

A Brooklyn cut-up rock band that just doesn't know how to shut up or settle down

One of this Ritalin-rock quartet's jumpy, funny songs asks "Did I Wear U Out?" and it's a fair question. "Commercial," which opens the Brooklyn band's fourth release in three years, hops from thumping verse to call-and-response chorus to funky bridge, showcasing in quick succession the voices of lyricist Christopher Dean Heine, guitarist Alec Ferrell and drummer Angela Webster. The Holy Ghost are less interesting when they stay in the same mode for an entire song, but that doesn't happen often. Elsewhere, horns juice "Genghis Khan," "Jiggle" struts its appreciation of the female form and "Shut Up and Play" reacts briskly to the fact that "we haven't slept together since last May." Exhausting, but it's a good kind of tired.

MARK JENKINS

DOWNLOAD: "Commercial," "Did I Wear U Out?"

HOLLERTRONIX

T5 SOUL SESSIONS, VOLUME 2 ✪✪✪✪

TRIPLE 5 SOUL

Philly DJs curate a dizzying mix of the music the Killers and Franz Ferdinand owe their skinny ties to

A DJ duo with the daring conviction that Lil Jon's hits segue excellently into the Cure's, Hollertronix have two passions: crunk juice and eyeliner. On this set—available free from Triple5Soul.com—they scrap the former for a dance mix supposedly recorded in 1985. That story's bogus, but this mix is sublime, bleeding together essential rarities

I LOVE THIS CD!

MEKHI PHIFER
ACTOR, ER, DAWN OF THE DEAD

CURTIS MAYFIELD SUPERFLY
RHINO

"I love old-school R&B and funk. My iPod is filled with old-school from Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield and Al Green."

THE GAME: JONATHAN MANNION; PHIFER: JIM SPELLMAN/WIREIMAGE.COM

Al Green, not packing in crowds as he used to.

(Talking Heads' "Sugar on my Tongue"), dinky disco gems (Sexual Harassment's "If I Gave You a Party"), proto-rap relics (ESG's "Erase You"), unexpectedly funky goth (Bauhaus's "Kick in the Eye") and electro-pop monuments (New Order's "True Faith"). On the closing cut, Kraftwerk gives way to Afrika Bambaataa, dropping us neatly on hip-hop's doorstep. This mix proves some trains are worth spotting.

JONAH WEINER

DOWNLOAD: "Sugar Money Radio FM," "Take It to Siouxsie's House," "Losing Your Virginity"

BILLY IDOL

DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND ✪✪✪

SANCTUARY

The man who sold out punk rock still cries "More, more, more"

THAT GUY FROM THE WEDDING SINGER

Ever since he quit his comparatively sober, late-'70s punk band, Generation X, for a best-selling solo career run with classic '80s flash and all the black leather in Hollywood, this famously platinum-haired Englishman has been one of the best rock singers in the biz. In the presence of a regular beat, whether disco- or guitar-based, Idol rocks with the instinct, power and comfort that Placido Domingo brings to Verdi. Because Idol has always branded himself so cunningly, the high quality of his music has frequently been overlooked. On this entertaining album, teamed again with longtime producer Keith Forsey, Idol never phones in his classic punk ("Super Overdrive"), shadowy midtempo rock ("Rat Race") or sex-crazed dance music ("Scream"). He still gets worked up, gets hot and gets around town with a "dashboard Jesus." And, of course, he snarls. Vitally.

JAMES HUNTER

DOWNLOAD: "Rat Race," "Scream"

IVY

IN THE CLEAR ✪✪✪

NETTWERK

New York trio with ties to Fountains of Wayne sound as fabulous as a weekend in Paris

Ivy are a rare breed: pop classicists who sound completely up to date. On *Apartment Life* (1997) and *Long Distance* (2001), you could easily detect debts to the Smiths, Serge Gainsbourg, bossa nova giant Antonio Carlos Jobim and other worthy predecessors, but strong songwriting, eccentric arrangements and a modern brand of European *froideur* steered the songs clear of pastiche. Here, French-born singer Dominique Durand, Andy Chase and Adam Schlesinger of Fountains of Wayne move further into textured mood music. "Corners of Your Mind" and "Tess, Don't Tell" irresistibly set Durand's reverb-swathed vocals against a wall of ringing guitars. But it's the grander widescreen stuff—the sonic smudges and slow, rolling crescendos of "Nothing but the Sky"—that shimmers like a poster of the Seine in sunlight.

JODY ROSEN

DOWNLOAD: "Nothing but the Sky," "Thinking About You"

SHOOTER JENNINGS

PUT THE O BACK IN COUNTRY ✪✪✪

UNIVERSAL SOUTH

Rollicking first album from the son of an outlaw icon (no, not Peter)

Shooter Jennings, the son of late country legend Waylon, has jammed with Guns n' Roses and dated *Sopranos* hottie Drea de Matteo. But he's no rock star; in fact, his debut paints him as exactly the opposite—just a good ol' boy, as much of an outsider in Nashville as he is in L.A. While that's not entirely true—after all, it sure wasn't a pretty singing voice that got him his record deal—freewheeling romps like "4th of July" are charmingly unfussy. And despite its raggedness (or maybe because of it), his rock-country mishmash—too redneck for Hollywood, too rowdy for Music Row—only aids his outlaw ambitions. Someday the mountain might get him, but Clear Channel never will.

JOSH EELLS

DOWNLOAD: "4th of July," "Solid Country Gold"

JACK JOHNSON

IN BETWEEN DREAMS ✪✪

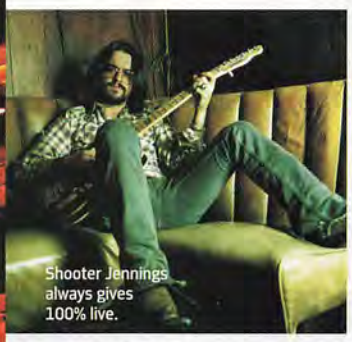
ENJOY/UNIVERSAL

The gentle lull of softly crashing waves. You're getting sleepy … very sleepy

For five years, the former pro surfer Jack Johnson has cultivated his music career without ever having to leave the beach. On two previous albums, his sleepy, incidental charm has taken over where his cloying words and unremarkable voice fail him. By now, though, Johnson has finely honed the aww-shucks quality of his songwriting, making for an assured yet curiously unsatisfying shamble. At his best, on "Do You Remember" and the Hall & Oates–esque "Crying Shame," he suggests a young Garfunkel savoring excerpts from his tween diaries. Most often, though, he doles out lazy dorm-room poetry ("Banana Pancakes," "Staple It Together") that makes his touring buddy Ben Harper sound like Stevie Wonder, resulting in songs as limp as low tide.

JON CARAMANICA

DOWNLOAD: "Do You Remember"


Shooter Jennings always gives 100% live.

Judas Priest prepare to burn rubber down to Bingo Night.

JUDAS PRIEST

ANGEL OF RETRIBUTION ✪✪✪

EPIC

English metal gods reunite for the first time since 1990, proving balding men can hail Satan with the best of 'em

At 10 songs, *Angel of Retribution* is short and to the point—which isn't the only quality here reminiscent of Judas Priest's iron-age heyday. In his second coming, gay metal icon Rob Halford's operatic clarion is leathery but still hell-bent as he pledges allegiance to the damned ("Deal With the Devil") and gets misty-eyed over hot savior dudes on the Darkness-worthy "Angel." Producer Roy Z steers a course between nü-school schlock and old-school kitsch, turning guitar solos into well-timed blitzkriegs and making scrappy biker anthems like "Hellrider" rumble and shudder. You can find kids playing harder and faster in the cut-out bins at Hot Topic, but if you're lookin' for trouble, you came to the right place.

CARLY CAROLI

DOWNLOAD: "Judas Is Rising," "Deal With the Devil"

KAISER CHIEFS

EMPLOYMENT ✪✪✪✪

UNIVERSAL

Drunk on keyboards and guitar, hyperactive five-piece are the most exciting new Brits since Franz Ferdinand

No matter how impressed you may be with the Kaiser Chiefs, they're way more impressed with themselves. The least self-serious of the new wave of New Wave bands from Britain are smug, preening and shallow, and so eager to entertain that they nearly piss themselves with pizzazz and energy. With a plummy theatricality that would have Orlando Bloom shouting for

CONTINUED ON P. 122

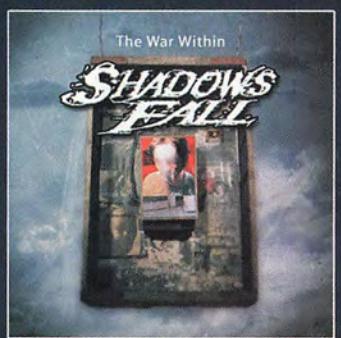
GREEN: CLAY PATRICK MCBRIDE. JENNINGS: JAMES MINCHIN. JUDAS PRIEST: ROSS HALFIN

"Relentless thrash metal" - Rolling Stone

"Iron Maiden for the Grand Theft Auto generation" - SPIN

"The War Within... equally as revolutionary as the classic Master Of Puppets was to Metallica's career" - GUITAR

The War Within



ON TOUR WITH

Slipknot & lamb of god

CENTURY MEDIA

www.shadowsfallrocks.com • www.centurymedia.com

Available at: BEST BUY

Thousands of Possibilities

GET YOURS

THE METAL GODS ARE BACK

Judas Priest

ANGEL OF RETRIBUTION

The new album from the classic lineup.

Available on DualDisc. Video content includes a documentary and 7 live Priest classics.
Also available as a Deluxe Collector's Edition CD/DVD.

IN STORES NOW

WWW.JUDASPRIEST.COM
WWW.JUDASPRIESTONLINE.COM
WWW.EPICRECORDS.COM

EPIC

"Epic" and Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Registrada./© 2005 SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

AVAILABLE NOW AT
samgoody

a curtain call, singer Ricky Wilson turns cheap dismissals into elegant hooks, advising adversaries, "It don't matter to me," or "It's not my fault, I don't care." His sense of humor is too often mean—he likes to insult girls—but with the help of Blur and Smiths producer Stephen Street, the twelve unflagging songs are perfectly tailored. Excitement motivates them even more than self-love; in the romping first single, "I Predict a Riot," the prospect of mayhem leaves them as eager as they are worried.

ROB TANNENBAUM

DOWNLOAD: "I Predict a Riot," "You Can Have It All," "Saturday Night"

KASABIAN

KASABIAN ✪✪

RCA

Swaggering U.K. electro-rockers talk it better than they walk it

VERY, VERY, VERY ENGLISH

By loudly trashing practically every extant band except Oasis, Kasabian have made the peculiarly British mistake of drumming up expectations their desperately ordinary music can't meet. Going by their chest-puffing interviews ("We make music to gear you up for ripping the music scene to shreds"), you might mistake them for fearless revolutionaries sent to save rock & roll. Play the CD, though, and it turns out they're just a slow-witted Primal Scream. Taking their name from Charles Manson's getaway driver and their sound from a 1991 indie-dance compilation, the Leicester quartet might impress anyone too young to remember the Happy Mondays, and they whip up potent pseudopsychedelic grooves on "Reason Is Treason" and "Test Transmission." But so far, their tedious bravado is more entertaining than their music.

DORIAN LYNSKEY

DOWNLOAD: "Test Transmission"

KEREN ANN

NOLITA ✪✪✪

METRO BLUE

Whispery French singer excels at pondering mystery while sounding chic

Keren Ann Zeidel made her American debut with 2004's *Not Going Anywhere* (her third album), a folkie record engrossed by stark contemplation. That continues on this beguiling follow-up, though her arrangements have grown to include wisps of viola and cello. The effect is elemental yet wildly ambitious. In "Chelsea Burns," a woman inhabits New York as an unknowable place; she is "running out of trouble," while her lover is "running out of fame." The lucid ballad "L'Onde Amère" ("The Bitter Wave"), sung in French, offers complex lyrics about fear. Ever since the '60s, French lovelies have made music that seems modeled on the country's perfume. Keren Ann is full of flowery fragrances, but she has a nose for lyrical expression too.

JAMES HUNTER

DOWNLOAD: "L'Onde Amère," "Chelsea Burns"

Kiki & Herb: Maybe the *Queer Eye* thing has gone too far.

KIKI & HERB

KIKI & HERB WILL DIE FOR YOU ✪✪✪✪

EVOLVER

Concert farewell from indie rock's greatest drag-queen cabaret act

For a decade, Kiki & Herb's lounge-act-to-end-all-lounge-acts packed crowds into New York's back-room clubs. Justin Bond was Kiki DuRayne, an acid-tongued, way-over-the-hill chanteuse who alternated cabaret-style Belle & Sebastian and Wu-Tang Clan covers with drunken monologues about her tragic life ("Ladies 'n' gennamen: People die"); Kenny Mellman was Herb, her hapless "gay Jew 'tard" pianist. This two-disc document of their 2004 Carnegie Hall farewell is a yowling mess at the start, but once Bond settles in, he's in hilarious form, torching up the very unusual repertoire (notably a Gil Scott-Heron/Eminem/Talking Heads medley). And every so often, Kiki's scenery-chewing delivery finds the pain and bitterness in these songs—which is what made Bond's character more than a drag-queen joke.

DOUGLAS WOLK

DOWNLOAD: "Institutionalized," "Running up That Hill"

RUVEN AFANADOR

In the United States Air Force, we learned long ago that knowledge is the most powerful tool on earth. So we go to great lengths to keep an eye on things above as well as below. Intelligence-gathering missions are an everyday occurrence for us. And so are the efforts that go into expanding our

The Libertines: "We'd like a syringe *this* big ..."

The Kills: "Take *this*, Surgeon General!"

THE KILLS: KENNETH CAPPELLO

THE KILLS

NO WOW ✪✪✪

RCA

Dark, messy twosome sing the bad-love blues with a grunge accent

Once the leanest of boy-girl blues-punk duos, the Kills have put some machine-generated flesh on their bare-bones style. The driving title track of the half-Anglo, half-American band's second album, *No Wow*, adds grubby synth to a vocals-guitars-drums sound that's as stark as the musicians' aliases: "VV" and "Hotel." By the time Hotel's guitar and voice join VV's PJ Harvey–like baying, the grim boogie has nearly become an epic. Among this urgent set's other memorable odes to trashed loves and lives are the skeletal "Ticket Man," which is just VV and a brooding piano figure, and "Sweet Cloud," whose pulsing vitality refutes the song's own "lost a lot of blood" mantra.

MARK JENKINS

DOWNLOAD: "No Wow," "Ticket Man"

THE LIBERTINES

WHAT BECAME OF THE LIKELY LADS ✪✪✪

ROUGH TRADE

What Kate Moss's new boyfriend did—before he did lots of heroin and crack

Nearly reduced to a prequel to singer Pete Doherty's tabloid career as a celebrity dope addict, the Libertines deserved better. And this seven-track EP's rattling, drunk-punk title song provides an apt valediction—"What became of forever?"—for the volatile, intensely creative partnership between Doherty and co-singer Carl Barât, while the core of four live tracks gives some hint of the chemistry and charisma that made them Britain's most exciting band. Of these, "Skag and Bone Man" best exemplifies their unique, Clash-play-the-Star-Club sound; "Time for Heroes" their rakish wit ("Did you see the stylish kids in the riot?"); and "The Delaney" their captivating ability to drive their songs like death-trap jalopies around the Indy 500. Farewell then, Libertines; you really did know no fear.

TONY POWER

DOWNLOAD: "What Became of the Likely Lads (Album Mix)," "Time for Heroes (Live at Brixton)," "The Delaney (Live)"

BRIAN MCKNIGHT

GEMINI ✪✪✪

UNIVERSAL

Mr. Romance woos the ladies and ... paints their toenails?

You've got to admire Brian McKnight for working so hard to revive the unfashionable '80s bedroom-soul tradition of Luther Vandross and Freddie Jackson. In his third recording decade, this semi-star has figured out the formula and executes it masterfully, with a silky voice to caress you, baby, and lite-FM-ready grooves all over the place. The '80s were all about never breaking a sweat, and on coolly seductive tracks like "Every Time You Go Away" and "Stay," McKnight handles himself like a *Miami Vice* regular. In the savory falsetto slow-jam "Everything I Do," he even takes a page from (early, kinky) Prince and tells his woman he'll gladly do "all the things that you like to do/Like washing your hair and painting your nails." Nice to see a ➔

CAN YOU SEE US? WE CAN SEE YOU.

U.S. AIR FORCE
CROSS INTO THE BLUE

©2004 Paid for by the U.S. Air Force. All rights reserved.

information-gathering systems. From launching satellites to monitoring literally 100,000 pieces of junk that orbit overhead, we are the eyes and ears of the nation. If you share our passion for information, maybe you should have your eyes on us. Call 1-800-423-USAF or log on to AIRFORCE.COM.

Queens of the Stone Age didn't have the heart to tell grandma "no."

HIGH AND DRY

California-desert rock maniacs lose members, inspiration

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

LULLABIES TO PARALYZE ✪✪✪

INTERSCOPE

QUEENS OF THE Stone Age have failed. With the release of their 2000 mastertoke, *Rated R*, they brought together desert-stoner and art-school-dropout attitudes, a searing, sunstroked mix. But in the wake of the platinum-selling *Songs for the Deaf*, front-dude Josh Homme's ear has grown tinny and his rotating cast of bandmates has shrunk to just two: bassist Troy van Leeuwen and drummer Joey Castillo.

Lullabies to Paralyze is unmistakably a Queens album: The windblown, minimalist metal turns from flat and punishing to undulating and mystical on a dimebag, and surreal lyrics add a dash of intrigue, when you can make them out. But without star temps like Dave Grohl and Screaming Trees vocalist Mark Lanegan—plus longtime bassist-singer Nick Oliveri, rumored to have been forced out for partying too hard—the album also sounds routine, obscure without much mystery.

Josh Homme has always been at the band's center. Now, he is the band. The just-say-yes "Medication," two minutes of unyielding punk thrum, bears his distinct stamp: tension rung from chords held for almost too long, and ambiguous, falsetto-singed vocals that give the mannered music an otherworldly glaze. The problem is twofold. Drone, Homme's *modus operandi*, grows wearying regardless of its rewards. And when the band ably attempts gnarlier rhythms—the ingeniously titled speed-bump groove "Tangled Up in Plaid," the hip-hop-beated, noise-shredded "Skin on Skin"—well, they too fall into a drone-like clamor. Meanwhile, Homme's themes of desolation and delusion often sound like bad jokes: "I'm gonna go dance in the rain/I guess I've really gone insane."

JOSH HOMME'S DRONE GROWS WEARYING.

"Medication" maximizes the less-is-more formula, while bulldozer excursions like "Someone's in the Wolf" and "The Blood Is Love" merely fulfill it. "Little Sister" revives the element that set apart *Rated R* and that is all too scarce here: simple pop exuberance. More than just wallop, it's got impact, thanks to a humming tempo and sugared melody. After all, an hour's worth of stoner rock will give you the munchies.

NICK CATUCCI

DOWNLOAD: "Little Sister," "Medication"

singer who's not afraid to get his hands dirty.

BEN SISARIO

DOWNLOAD: "Everything I Do," "Every Time You Go Away"

MOBY

HOTEL ✪✪✪

V2

Bald, synth-smitten vegan rejects blues, gospel, even samples in his luxury hospitality suite

Both in title and vibe, Moby's latest seems designed for some moody, $600-a-night lodging—perhaps the Park Hyatt Tokyo that Air set off so tastefully in *Lost in Translation*. Ahhh: Set your head into the pillows as "Spiders" opens its majestic chorus. Ohhhh: Let water jets massage your feet as "Homeward Angel" spins its elegy. Then there's a separate ambient CD for insomnia. Forgoing samples and singing on nearly every song, the techno star gets more up-close-and-personal here—a ballsy move for someone the Lord didn't heap with vocal gifts, but one that pays off in conveying these songs of trembling doubt and sad longing. Though the heavy-breathing "I Like It" may be more a bit more Moby than you'd care for.

ASTONISHING FACT!

MOBY lived next door to the Bush family in Connecticut and taught John Kerry how to play "Ring of Fire" on guitar.

CHRIS NORRIS

DOWNLOAD: "Spiders," "Very"

NEVA DINOVA

THE HATE YOURSELF CHANGE ✪✪

SADDLE CREEK

Depressed Omaha troubadour and close personal friend of Conor Oberst cracks wise about suicide—hilarious!

Some might say Neva Dinova singer Jake Bellows has an "old soul," but really, his weary, warbled sadness is equal parts narcissism and naiveté. Like labelmate and collaborator Conor Oberst of Bright Eyes, Bellows couples his extravagant sentiment with self-conscious irony. Here, the two meet like a car crash. Album closer "I've Got a Feeling"—draggy, organ-and-lapsteel folk rock capped with a chorus blithely belting, "The world's a shitty place, and I can't wait to die"—feels like a double-cross coming after "Cold Calls," a truly poignant half-sigh, half-squall reminiscent of prime Neil Young. Factor in patience-testing plaints like the austere acoustic ballad "Hat O'er Eyes" and the insult to empathetic listeners is even greater. Jake Bellows acts as if he hates his feelings. It's contagious.

NICK CATUCCI

DOWNLOAD: "Cold Calls"

OMARION

O ✪✪✪

SONY URBAN/EPIC

Gone-solo B2K teen star wants to be the black Justin Timberlake

Justin, Beyoncé … and Omarion? With his solo debut, the former member of R&B boy-band B2K seeks membership in the I-was-the-*real*-talent-in-the-group club. He'll probably get it, though his producers deserve more credit: The 19-year-old dances, smiles and sings soulfully, but this is a studio-driven affair. The thick, clattering beats take center stage; Omarion simply croons commands: "Take It Off," "Touch" or "Drop That Heater." The '70s-funk number "Never Gonna Let You Go"—backed by live instruments and crowned by a verse from Big Boi of Outkast—is the standout; the duds are perfunctory slow jams like "Fiening You," on which Omarion sounds too smooth for his fresh-outta-boy-band age. Teens know more about the dance floor than the bedroom, and as long as he keeps it up-tempo, this mini-Mack gives Usher, Mario and Justin some competition.

BAZ DREISINGER

DOWNLOAD: "Never Gonna Let You Go," "Drop That Heater"

ROBBERS ON HIGH STREET

TREE CITY ✪✪✪

SCRATCHIE/NEW LINE

NYC group sing about youthful melancholy and crazy girlfriends

"I know what I want, if I know I could get it," slurs Ben Trokan of this New York quartet on the nervy, voyeuristic "Japanese Girls," and ambivalence has never sounded so sexy or exuberant. On their first album since a *Blender*-approved EP last year, the group tears through a set of piano-based chamber rock so tense and acidic they need to let off steam every two or three songs. Lazy, dissonant sulks like "Descender" and "Beneath the Trees" play off

I LOVE THIS CD!

CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER
ACTOR, LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS

NELLY SWEAT/SUIT
FO' REEL/UNIVERSAL

"We've both got St. Louis pride, and with those two albums he's got you covered from the dance floor to the bedroom."

LEFT TO RIGHT: CHAPMAN BAEHLER; STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE.COM

desperately excited rave-ups about bad sex ("Amanda Green," "Spanish Teeth") like bipolar ups and downs. But these boys have their priorities in order, and in "Bring on the Terror" they save their most joyful melodies for a good question: what the hell to do with their lives.

BEN SISARIO

DOWNLOAD: "Japanese Girls," "Beneath the Trees," "Bring on the Terror"

JOSH ROUSE

NASHVILLE ✪✪✪

RYKODISC

Gentle singer's LP blows his adopted hometown a bittersweet kiss goodbye

"You are the only one whose blue skies are gray," sighs Josh Rouse on "Sad Eyes," and, unless he's standing in front of a mirror, he's overlooking someone. Rouse is to singer-songwriters what Charlie Brown is to the comics page: a perpetual pessimist whose glass is always half empty and whose football never stays put. Even *1972*, his slightly pale homage to AM radio's funky, folky golden era, snuck in some gloom beneath the sunshine. Lyrically, *Nashville*—a kind of Dear John letter to the city Rouse called home for 10 years—is about as insightful as a *Hee Haw* rerun. But the languid guitar-and-piano arrangements are full of regret, and his warm, reedy voice gives comfort where his words can't.

JOSH EELLS

DOWNLOAD: "It's the Nighttime," "Winter in the Hamptons"

THE SOUNDTRACK OF OUR LIVES

ORIGIN VOL. 1 ✪✪✪

REPUBLIC/UNIVERSAL

Throwback Swedish singer needs only a pointy hat to turn into Gandalf

Ebbot Lundberg appears earnest on the thundering and overtly *Who's Next*-ish "Transcendental Suicide" when he proclaims, "We need new songs to sing." He desperately aspires to be a bearded truth-telling oracle, a *Lord of the Rings* character returning rock to its majestic peak. He'd be more persuasive if the music didn't sound so much like Bad Company. Through 14 mostly stomping rockers, Lundberg's fervor is surrounded by dependably thrumming, rudimentary anthem-rock concoctions that dilute (if not mock) the existential anguish of his narratives. Despite its epic ambitions, this is a more streamlined, less colorful statement than TSOOL's 2001 *Behind the Music*, and only occasionally (as on the hurtling instrumental rush that ends "Mother One Track Mind") attains earth-moving power.

TOM MOON

DOWNLOAD: "Mother One Track Mind," "Transcendental Suicide"

Omarion: Formerly known as Odumbhaircut.

STARS

SET YOURSELF ON FIRE ✪✪✪✪

ARTS & CRAFTS

Another group of coed Canadian weirdos celebrate vitality and innocence

Everything's tinkly and burbly in Montreal, where bands like the Arcade Fire and Stars are exulting in a new kind of overstuffed pop. Call it parlor wave, for the way Stars mix cozy horns and strings with a perky New Wave pulse, and hint at anything from Phil Spector to Talking Heads, Stereolab to Belle and Sebastian, while they toss in instruments from banjo to sleighbells to magnificently wobbly analog synthesizers. Stars' third album moves from boy-girl strife, with Amy Millan and Torquil Campbell trading recriminations, to reflections on memory, war and mortality. The songs are sincere without sappiness and orchestral without bombast, and as the crescendos overflow into euphoric hooks, Stars live up to their self-appointed mission: "We are here to make you feel," they sing.

JON PARELES

DOWNLOAD: "Calendar Girl," "Set Yourself on Fire," "Ageless Beauty"

3 DOORS DOWN

SEVENTEEN DAYS ✪

REPUBLIC/UNIVERSAL

Even Bob Seger can't salvage the angsty Mississippi rockers' latest festival of moaning

As still-clutching-on-to-the-basics-of-grunge experts, 3 Doors Down have sold more than 10 million records by hewing to a simple formula. Their songs move through drab minor-chord progressions; the lyrics are achingly self-pitying and Oprah-earnest; and when the choruses arrive as promptly as a commuter train, you can be sure a distortion pedal will be stepped on and singer Brad Arnold's caterwauling will begin. The band's latest offers a dozen new epically dull anthems, whose monotony is briefly broken by a cameo from '70s heartland master Bob Seger—no stranger to rock bombast—who duets on "Landing in London," an instant kitsch classic about life on the road. But then it's back to bellyaching. "I've bottled up all this pain!" Arnold shrieks in "Father's Son." If only.

JODY ROSEN

DOWNLOAD: "Landing in London"

BLENDER APPROVED

The best new releases of the past months

BRIGHT EYES

I'M WIDE AWAKE, IT'S MORNING

SADDLE CREEK

Indie rock's warbling It Boy takes a break from posing for magazine shoots to craft this hopeful call-to-arms for the *Daily Show* generation.

LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

DFA

On a double-CD beat bonanza, the production wizard behind New York's hippest label, DFA, explores the downside of hipness.

JOHN LEGEND

GET LIFTED

SONY URBAN/COLUMBIA

The sharp-dressed piano man—and Kanye West wingman—strikes gold out of the gate with this smooth-as-ivory '70s soulfest.

M.I.A.

ARULAR

XL

An exhilarating mix of Caribbean riddims and politico rhymes from Jay-Z's favorite London-via-Sri-Lanka hip-hopstress.

BROOKE VALENTINE

CHAIN LETTER ✪✪✪

VIRGIN

Houston hottie, 19, puts up crunk front, but really just wants to snuggle

Brooke Valentine sings as if she's at war with her beats—as angry as they get, she can get angrier. On her debut, she's boiling over, spurred on by brawny numbers like "Tell Me Why You Don't Love Me" and the Lil Jon–produced "Girlfight." Best of all is the stellar revenge fantasy "I Want You Dead," the most off-kilter-yet-whimsical woman-wronged song since Kelis's "Caught out There." But Valentine has a supple, if plain, voice; ultimately, it's far too gentle for this collection of barnstormers, only revealing its contours on ballads like the gentle "Cover Girl," where Valentine sighs "I'm not Halle Berry, girls from videos/I just wanna be someone you can hold." Humble? Sure. But really, just relieved to be heard amidst all the clatter.

JON CARAMANICA

DOWNLOAD: "Girlfight," "I Want You Dead"

M. WARD

TRANSISTOR RADIO ✪✪✪

MERGE

Bright Eyes–endorsed Portland, OR, troubadour sings about FM in the wee hours of the A.M.

Full of despair and mystique, strumming his guitar like a kid wearing grandpa's cardigan, anachronistic folkie M. Ward made a minor splash in 2003, landing a co-billed tour with Conor Oberst (Bright Eyes) and Jim James (My Morning Jacket). His fourth album—which he calls a tribute to "utopian radio power"—is at once intimate and far-off, hearkening to a semi-imaginary era when Dust Bowl farmhands huddled together over a beat-up Zenith and strained to hear transmissions floating through the dark. Ward adds to the ambience by delivering his cryptic musings in a thick, syrupy rasp that rarely rises above a whisper. It's like a beautiful broadcast from a room down the hall, disappearing the minute it leaves the speakers.

JOSH EELLS

DOWNLOAD: "Hi-Fi," "I'll Be Yr Bird"

JONATHAN MANNION

20th CENTURY masters

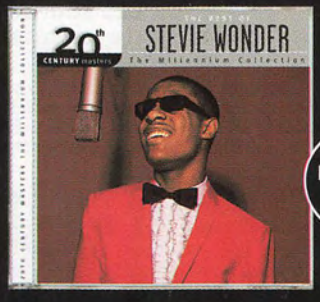
THE MILLENNIUM COLLECTION

I LOVE THAT SONG!

"Like a fool I went and stayed too long.
Now I'm wondering if your love's still strong.
Ooooh baby, here I am, signed,
sealed, delivered, I'm yours"

- "SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED, (I'M YOURS)" STEVIE WONDER

THIS AND OTHER GREAT HITS AVAILABLE ON 20TH CENTURY MASTERS MILLENNIUM COLLECTION, THE BEST OF STEVIE WONDER



In Stores 3/22

Over 350 CDs and DVDs of the artists and songs you know and love.
At this price it's the perfect way to build your collection.

www.ilovethatsong.com

MOTOWN UMe
A UNIVERSAL MUSIC COMPANY

UNIVERSAL NEW LOW PRICE

Available At
TARGET

© 2005 Universal Music Enterprises, a Division of UMG Recordings, Inc.

STING! Bring on the Night

Recorded live on tour in Paris, Rome and Arnhem, 1985.

BRING ON THE NIGHT 2CD SET

Newly Remastered with Deluxe Packaging

STING
BROKEN MUSIC TOUR
APRIL 1ST TO MAY 13TH
FOR MORE INFO VISIT
WWW.STING.COM

BRING ON THE NIGHT DVD

Twenty years later and for the first time on DVD, the film BRING ON THE NIGHT is brought to new life with high-definition digital anamorphic picture transfer

Digitally Remastered DTS & Dolby 5.1 Surround

Three Bonus Music Videos "Bring On The Night," "If You Love Somebody Set Them Free" & "Russians"

A&M RECORDS
A UNIVERSAL MUSIC COMPANY

NEW LOW PRICE

©2005 Universal Music Enterprises, a Division of UMG Recordings, Inc.

Available At

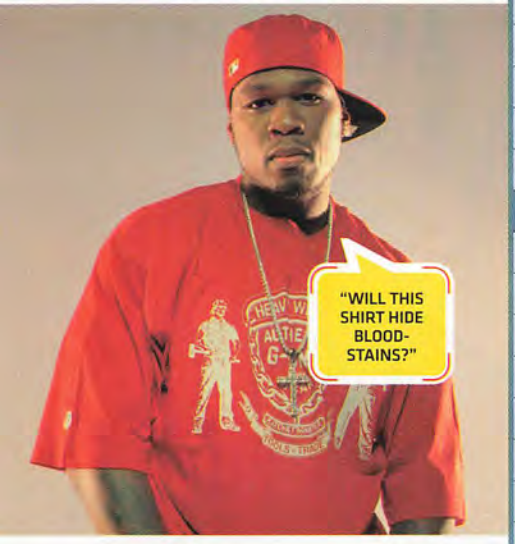
Hollywood • New York: Times Square and Union Square • San Francisco Orlando Walt Disney® World Resort
Chicago • New Orleans • Denver • Miami Burbank • Sacramento • Costa Mesa • Ontario Mills
Arizona Mills • Dallas: Grapevine Mills and Mockingbird Station • Orange • Boston • Salt Lake City

Virgin MEGASTORE
VIRGINMEGA.COM

Selection. Part of The Complete Collection.

THE 40 MOST POPULAR SONGS IN AMERICA

EVEN J. LO AND HER INSURED BOOTY CAN'T KNOCK 50 FROM THE TOP ...



POSITION	TITLE	ARTIST	ALBUM/LABEL
1	"CANDY SHOP"	50 CENT	*THE MASSACRE* G-UNIT/INTERSCOPE
2	"GET RIGHT"	JENNIFER LOPEZ	*REBIRTH* EPIC
3	"BABY I'M BACK"	BABY BASH	*SUPER SAUCY* UNIVERSAL
4	"DISCO INFERNO"	50 CENT	*THE MASSACRE* G-UNIT/AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE
5	"HOW WE DO"	THE GAME FEAT. 50 CENT	*THE DOCUMENTARY* G-UNIT/INTERSCOPE
6	"CAUGHT UP"	USHER	*CONFESSIONS* LAFACE
7	"BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS"	GREEN DAY	*AMERICAN IDIOT* REPRISE
8	"MOCKINGBIRD"	EMINEM	*ENCORE* SHADY/AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE
9	"LITTLE SISTER"	QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE	*LULLABIES TO PARALYZE* INTERSCOPE
10	"LET ME LOVE YOU"	MARIO	*TURNING POINT* J RECORDS
11	"SITTING, WAITING WISHING"	JACK JOHNSON	*IN BETWEEN DREAMS* ENJOY/UNIVERSAL
12	"ORDINARY PEOPLE"	JOHN LEGEND	*GET LIFTED* SONY URBAN/COLUMBIA
13	"N DEY SAY"	NELLY	*SUIT* FO' REEL/UNIVERSAL
14	"RICH GIRL"	GWEN STEFANI FEAT. EVE	*LOVE ANGEL MUSIC BABY* INTERSCOPE
15	"SOLDIER"	DESTINY'S CHILD	*DESTINY FULFILLED* COLUMBIA
16	"ALL BECAUSE OF YOU"	U2	*HOW TO DISMANTLE AN ATOMIC BOMB* INTERSCOPE
17	"BEAUTIFUL SOUL"	JESSE MCCARTNEY	*BEAUTIFUL SOUL* HOLLYWOOD
18	"LIKE TOY SOLDIERS"	EMINEM	*ENCORE* SHADY/AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE
19	"GALVANIZE"	CHEMICAL BROTHERS	*PUSH THE BUTTON* ASTRALWERKS
20	"GIRLFIGHT"	BROOKE VALENTINE	*CHAIN LETTER* VIRGIN
21	"1,2 STEP"	CIARA	*GOODIES* LAFACE
22	"LET ME GO"	3 DOORS DOWN	*SEVENTEEN DAYS* REPUBLIC/UNIVERSAL
23	"OBSESSION"	FRANKIE J	*THE ONE* COLUMBIA
24	"NUMB/ENCORE"	JAY-Z/LINKIN PARK	*COLLISION COURSE* WARNER BROS.
25	"NOT THAT KIND OF GIRL"	JOJO	*JOJO* BLACKGROUND/UNIVERSAL
26	"AN HONEST MISTAKE"	THE BRAVERY	*THE BRAVERY* ISLAND
27	"MR. BRIGHTSIDE"	THE KILLERS	*HOT FUSS* ISLAND
28	"GASOLINA"	DADDY YANKEE	*BARRIO FINO* VI
29	"ALMOST"	BOWLING FOR SOUP	*A HANGOVER YOU DON'T DESERVE* JIVE
30	"LONELY"	AKON	*TROUBLE* SRC/UNIVERSAL
31	"OH"	CIARA	*GOODIES* LAFACE
32	"EVIL"	INTERPOL	*ANTICS* MATADOR
33	"BRING EM OUT"	T.I.	*URBAN LEGEND* GRAND HUSTLE/ATLANTIC
34	"NEIGHBORHOOD #3 (POWER OUT)"	THE ARCADE FIRE	*FUNERAL* MERGE
35	"THE WIDOW"	MARS VOLTA	*FRANCES THE MUTE* GSL/STRUMMER/UNIVERSAL
36	"DAUGHTERS"	JOHN MAYER	*HEAVIER THINGS* COLUMBIA
37	"WE ARE NOT ALONE"	BREAKING BENJAMIN	*WE ARE NOT ALONE* HOLLYWOOD
38	"IT'S LIKE THAT"	MARIAH CAREY	*THE EMANCIPATION OF MIMI* MONARC/ISLAND
39	"TRUTH IS"	FANTASIA	*FREE YOURSELF* J RECORDS
40	"COLD"	CROSSFADE	*CROSSFADE* FG/COLUMBIA

1

50 CENT

"CANDY SHOP"

THE MASSACRE

Curtis Jackson recorded more than 60 songs for his new album, then hand-picked favorites to make the final cut. This Bollywood-tinged oral-sex jam was top of the heap. Last month, 50 performed on *Saturday Night Live* and—in animated form—on *The Simpsons*. Expect tickets for a nationwide tour with Eminem to go on sale later this month.

HOW WE DID IT

hits daily double

The Most Popular Songs chart is based on radio and video airplay and album sales. Provided by HITSDailyDouble.com: "Proof that any idiot in the music business can have a Web site."

12

JOHN LEGEND

"ORDINARY PEOPLE"

GET LIFTED

John Legend is taking over your TV! Last month, Kanye West's piano-playing protégé performed at the Grammys, and next month he's playing Stevie Wonder in an episode of NBC's *American Dreams*. Fans who'd rather see him and his turtleneck in person can catch him live, opening for Alicia Keys through the end of April.

CHEMICAL BROTHERS

"GALVANIZE"

PUSH THE BUTTON

You'd think a group specializing in a genre that peaked last decade wouldn't look for help from a rapper who did the same. But this Middle Eastern–flavored banger, with guest vocals from Q-Tip, has made England's biggest beatmakers hot again. Dust off your glow sticks for a Coachella appearance, followed by a full slate of gigs later this summer.

THE ARCADE FIRE

"NEIGHBORHOOD #3 (POWER OUT)"

FUNERAL

With a legion of blogging devotees—and David Byrne and David Bowie on record as fans—this Montreal indie-rock troupe is the buzziest rock act of 2005. This month they play gigs throughout Europe, including London and Paris dates. In May they'll be back in the U.S., hauling their guitars and accordions to the Coachella music festival.

50 CENT: JONATHAN MANNION; CHEMICAL BROTHERS: MICK ROCK; ARCADE FIRE: ERIC MCNATT

GUEST LIST

COMPETITIONS, EVENTS AND OTHER FUN STUFF
WE THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

3against1 band members (from left to right) Mark Weiss (lead singer), Steve Adams (bassist), Saul Ashley (drummer), Brent Tyler (Zippo Marketing Manager) and Arnaud Lemaire (lead guitarist).

REGISTER NOW!

ZIPPO HOT TOUR

AS PART OF THE GRAND PRIZE package for winning the 2004 Zippo Hot Tour, San Diego rockers 3against1 were treated to studio time at S.I.R. Studios in NYC for a showcase with Island Records A&R executives, a full equipment package and beer.

In 2004, the Hot Tour received more than 1,200 entries, and bands had the chance to battle it out online and onstage for the grand prize package. In 2005, partners include Capitol Records, ESP Guitars, Peavey Amps, TAMA drums and PureVolume. Band registration for the Zippo Hot Tour program runs until April 14.

Log on to www.zippohottour.com for more info.

STAND UP!

Help pick the next Hip-Hop SupaStar. Text **SUPA** to **HSTAR** (**47827**) or visit *www.hiphopsupastar.com* to get more details.

cingular · Sony Ericsson

"Sony Urban" and bug are trademarks of, and are used under license from, Sony Corporation. "Columbia" and bug Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Registrada. ©2005 Cingular Wireless. All rights reserved.

SHADOWS FALL

★ **On tour now with Slipknot and Lamb of God!** Check out their hit album, *The War Within*, out now on Century Media Records!

Find out why *Blender* Magazine refers to Shadows Fall's "brusque speed metal" as "further bridging the gap between underground and mainstream!"

Log on to www.shadowsfallrocks.com or www.centurymedia.com.

NICK(IT)

Win a Weekend in *Monty Python's Spamalot!*

★ nick(it), the hot new menswear line, and JC Penney invite you to win a trip to see the new hit musical *Monty Python's Spamalot* in New York!

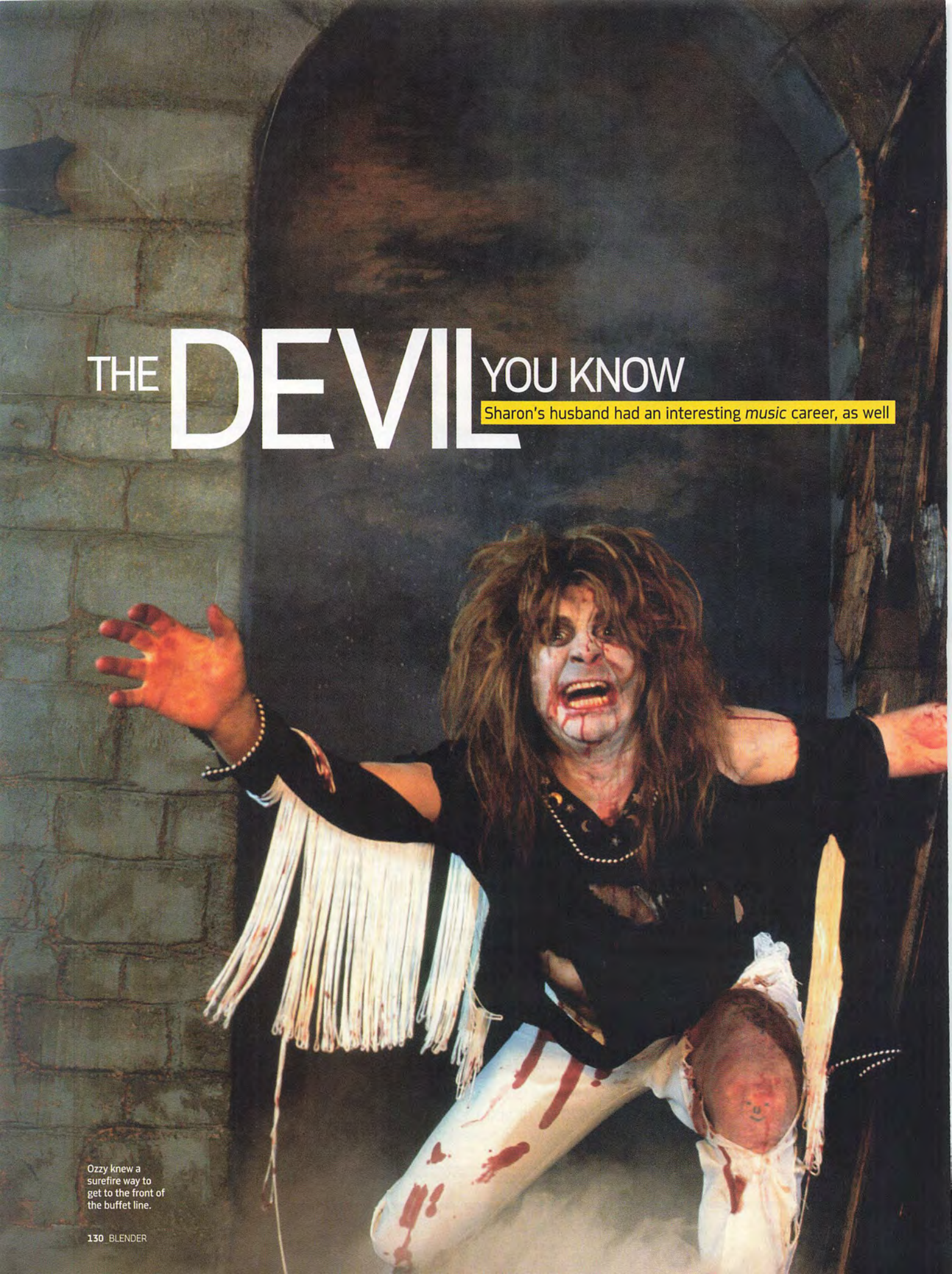
You and a friend will fly to New York City courtesy of Orbitz.com and the Millennium Broadway Hotel for a weekend of ridiculous English comedy and a complete new $500 wardrobe from nick(it)!

Visit www.nickit.us to enter!

No Purchase Necessary. Promotion ends 5/1/05. Must be 18 years or older and legal U.S. resident to enter. For full Official Rules visit www.nickit.us/rules. Void where prohibited.

THE DEVIL YOU KNOW

Sharon's husband had an interesting *music* career, as well



Ozzy knew a surefire way to get to the front of the buffet line.

FIN COSTELLO/REDFERNS/RETNA LTD.

OZZY OSBOURNE
PRINCE OF DARKNESS

✪✪✪

EPIC

MANY CULTURES HAVE a tradition of fatalism, but none so jolly as the English. Thomas Hardy's novels, Hilaire Belloc's *Cautionary Tales*, Mike Leigh's movies—it's all a comic, agnostic buffering against the dark side. Ozzy Osbourne and Black Sabbath are part of that cultural trait, and heavy metal was their way to ward off evil.

For 35 years, Osbourne has made a living singing about death, depression and dissolution, while regularly declaring that, on the contrary, he's more interested in life, love and safety. After all, his favorite band *is* the Beatles. "I hate to see sad faces," he has said. Playing rock & roll, biting animals and drinking heavily are other ways to not see sad faces, even if those defensive maneuvers can also be self-destructive. Osbourne has tried to be more morbid and profane than death itself, while never losing his sense of humor.

Given the heavy mercantile blitz of *The Osbournes* on MTV, it's a good time to reintroduce Ozzy Osbourne as not just a father and cleaner of dog poop but also as a musician who continued the tradition of Black Sabbath after leaving the group in 1978. After two strong initial albums, *Blizzard of Ozz* and *Diary of a Madman*, recorded with guitar virtuoso Randy Rhoads, his cheery English fatalism became gradually eclipsed by American optimism. Now and then he still shows his insecurities, obsessions and gallows humor, but mostly in interviews and on television rather than in his music.

FOR 35 YEARS, HE'S SUNG ABOUT DEATH, DEPRESSION AND DISSOLUTION.

Over four CDs that cover his post-Sabbath years, *Prince of Darkness* makes his case unevenly, through selected album cuts and a dangerously heavy tilt toward live tracks, B-sides and silly ephemera.

Be aware that five songs here from his first two solo records are the retouched versions. (They were re-recorded in 2002 with new bass and drum tracks to circumvent a lawsuit by Bob Daisley and Lee Kerslake, who believed they weren't compensated properly for their work on the session.) It's not a horrible job, though redoing great albums is wrong in principle. Plus, the adulterated mix pushes Rhoads down and erases the subtleties of Daisley's bass lines.

The set's peak moments are Rhoads's lightning arpeggios and his unaccompanied solo on "Suicide Solution," from the live album *Tribute*, released after he died in a 1982 plane crash. ("Suicide Solution" remains a good example of English black humor: using wordplay to describe killing yourself with alcohol.) In fact, Osbourne includes four songs from *Tribute*, acknowledging that it may be his best work. It's the one album of his you need most—even more than this, or Epic's vastly more sensible two-disc collection from 2003.

Osbourne's next guitarist, Jake E. Lee, gets his due with a rousing B-side live version of "Bark at the Moon" and three audio tracks from a mid-'80s live video. After that comes the Zakk Wylde chapter (guitarist, 1988–present), in which Ozzy has turned the corner, forfeited some of his own special humor and fear, and become slightly lost.

From the derivative swagger of 1988's "Crazy Babies," you can tell he's begun imitating the hair metal he inspired in the first place. The Birmingham boy has turned into a full Angeleno; the stiff upper lip has lip gloss all over it. When he pulls out some of the old skeptical, self-deflating moves in 2001's "Gets Me Through"—"I'm not the kind of person you think I am/I'm not the Antichrist or the Iron Man"—he's fighting to retain the scraps of a former significance.

Sadly, we're only halfway through the set. The third disc glorifies one-off collaborations from different eras that hardly deserve saving, with Primus, Therapy?, Type O Negative, Don Was, the Wu-Tang Clan and, yes, Miss Piggy (they sing "Born to Be Wild" so truly and guilelessly that it's actually sweet).

The set's fourth disc is a laborious gesture to fans: newly recorded cover versions of Osbourne's fave raves. (The songs were produced by Mark Hudson, an Aerosmith collaborator, who exacerbates Ozzy's grandiose tendencies, evident ever since late-era Black Sabbath.) You can hear how Osbourne's slurring and tremors have worsened over time, through renderings of Mott the Hoople's "All the Young Dudes," Mountain's "Mississippi Queen," the Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil" and a rather amazing version of John Lennon's "Working Class Hero."

Can you imagine? Ozzy Osbourne, television star, gazillionaire and clown, is still working through guilt and class issues. But the permanence of British class anxiety, like the appeal of beans on toast, is an impenetrable mystery. *BEN RATLIFF*

DOWNLOAD: "Suicide Solution [Live]," "Flying High Again," "Born to Be Wild"

THE SCORE »

- ✪✪✪✪✪ A CLASSIC
- ✪✪✪✪ GREAT
- ✪✪✪ GOOD
- ✪✪ MEDIOCRE
- ✪ FOUL

ATMOSPHERE

HEADSHOTS: SE7EN ✪✪✪✪

RHYMESAYERS

Minneapolis MC won't sell weed, frets about girls, invents indie-rap

A stroke of luck here and a chance meeting with Dr. Dre there, and Atmosphere frontman Slug, shivering in "lovely, snowy Minnesota," could have been Eminem, a lighter-skinned MC from the Midwest who reshaped mainstream hip-hop. Initially cassette-only and long out of print, these late-'90s cuts were recorded when Slim was barely Shady. Though Slug is deliciously versatile and dexterous, he finds it's not enough: Women bedevil him the way haters stymie other MCs, and he channels frustration into songs both arrogantly slick ("The Stick Up") and cathartic ("The Abusing of the Rib"). Clichés don't worry him: "I never had the skills that it took to sell weed," he shrugs. "I was too generous, too understanding to your needs." A generation of rap outsiders took his cue and turned introspective, but in its day, *Se7en* was the sound of hip-hop tradition beginning to splinter.

JON CARAMANICA

DOWNLOAD: "The Abusing of the Rib," "The Stick Up," "Dungeons and Dragons"

BEENIE MAN

KINGSTON TO KING OF THE DANCEHALL: A COLLECTION OF DANCEHALL FAVORITES ✪✪✪✪

VIRGIN

Now, that's entertainment! Dancehall sovereign compiles a slew of hits

Royal titles are to musicians what honorary doctorates are to celebrity alumni: dubious distinctions. Beenie Man, though, actually deserves his "king of the dance hall" crown. The longest-running act in a genre more fickle than J. Lo, Beenie has a voice that's sheer vaudeville: Vibrant and versatile, it renders beats beside the point. Hear him play court jester on this decade-spanning set, discharging peals of impish laughter while spinning yarns about "Romie and her big fat sister Naomi." Hear him tone it down and turn lounge singer ("Nuff Gal"), then camp it up for some skirt-chasing ("Girls Dem Sugar") or Jah praising ("Foundation"). Beenie's kingdom is governed by musical mantras: Never be boring, never take yourself too seriously—and always let the show go on.

BAZ DREISINGER

DOWNLOAD: "Slam," "Memories," "Miss L.A.P."

David Bowie, in his short-lived "Ellen DeGeneres" phase.

Beenie Man: "I and I peek-a-boo!"

DAVID BOWIE

DAVID LIVE ✪✪

STAGE ✪✪✪

VIRGIN

Live Bowie from back when he looked like the living dead

Today's live albums often crank audience noise up to party-hearty levels, but these two '70s relics are so sparse and arid that it sounds as if the shows were in a neighboring state. *David Live*, from 1974, pinpointed Bowie's shift from ambi-

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DAGMAR/GILLES RIBEROLLES; JONATHAN MANNION; JENS JURGENSEN

BIG BAWLERS

U.S. noise band mixed childish sulking with childish tantrums

DINOSAUR JR.

DINOSAUR ✪✪✪

YOU'RE LIVING ALL OVER ME ✪✪✪✪✪

BUG ✪✪✪✪

MERGE

NO WUSSES EVER rocked harder than Dinosaur Jr. Before Conor Oberst could even hold a guitar, before record companies could find Omaha on a map, this band made it okay to be sensitive in indie rock: J Mascis's guitar issues wave after wave of bunker-busting feedback and his voice shrieks to the breaking point. And yet, beneath the layers of squall, something tender spills out all over the floor, leaving a stain you'll never be able to mop up.

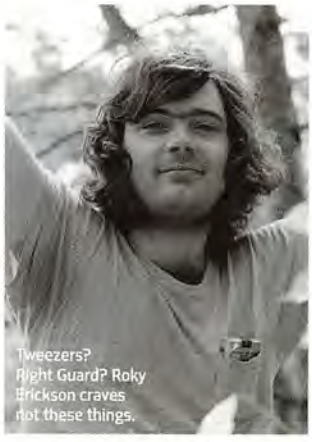
Formed in Massachusetts in 1984, the trio was led by guitarist-singer Mascis and bassist-singer Lou Barlow. The rhythm section is still in progress on their debut, but "Repulsion" is near-perfect, ridiculously hooky thrash. Sprawling and saturated with electricity, *You're Living All Over Me* (1987) knocks the training wheels off, turning the speed and squall of hardcore punk way inward. Dinosaur Jr. became couch-anchored moodists who could match R.E.M. mumble for mumble, if not song for song. "The Lung" and "In a Jar" have intricate pieces that snap together like a springloaded lock.

By *Bug* the next year, the two passive-aggressive frontmen were barely speaking to each other; Barlow didn't write any of the material, and the band came fully under Mascis's control. The songs are more manicured, less arty, while the guitar playing is off the hook—"Freak Scene" is a transcendent moment in postpunk noise. In the '90s, Barlow founded the introspective Sebadoh and outstripped Mascis, who now spells his last name M.I.A., but this is when Dinosaur Jr. thrashed.

RJ SMITH

DOWNLOAD: *Dinosaur*: "Repulsion"; *You're Living All Over Me*: "Little Fury Things," "Just Like Heaven"; *Bug*: "Freak Scene," "Budge"

Dinosaur Jr.: And you thought *Weezer* were studly!



Tweezers? Right Guard? Roky Erickson craves not these things.

sexual, cockatiel-haired glam megalomaniac to rake-thin cocaine hoover. Although the material, chiefly from *Diamond Dogs*, was some of the most grandiosely magnificent rock ever created, these were strained readings. Four years later, Bowie was more comfortable with his newfound sound—frigid Aryan funk—and as a result, *Stage* has worn better. Both come in now-obligatory expanded versions with extra tracks and surround-sound mixes, confirming the eternal truth of live albums: They're for fans only.

ANDREW HARRISON

DOWNLOAD: *David Live*: "Watch That Man," "Space Oddity"; *Stage*: "Heroes," "Breaking Glass"

NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS

B-SIDES AND RARITIES

✪✪✪

MUTE

Blood, guts, scum and other sticky substances: alt-rock's dark prince, off the leash

DOOM AND GLOOM. YAY!

Nick Cave's tales of murder, mayhem and the Dante-esque inferno of life on earth, scattered over 13 albums, define indie rock's outer edge of sanity. But those albums are Yanni compared with the juiciest moments on this three-CD collection, which spans 21 years. "Black Betty," a Leadbelly cover from 1986, is a cappella blues fumed with punk nihilism; "Scum" is pure bile, a verbal paroxysm egged on by Blixa Bargeld's razor-knife guitar. An acoustic version of 1988's "Deanna" morphs into the gospel standard "Oh Happy Day," improbably juxtaposing the lines "Jesus washed my tears away" and "I cum a death's head in her frock." The third CD, bogged down by more recent, maudlin material, almost spoils the livid fun. When Cave is bad he's unbeatable, but when he's good he's darn near awful.

KAREN SCHOEMER

DOWNLOAD: "Rye Whiskey," "Red Right Hand (*Scream 3* Version)," "Cocks 'n' Asses"

CROSBY, STILLS & NASH

GREATEST HITS ✪✪

ATLANTIC

Woodstock-era troubadours proved beauty can be annoying and dull

The music of Crosby, Stills & Nash has not aged well. Starring refugees from Buffalo Springfield (Stills), the Byrds (Crosby) and the Hollies (Nash), the group's self-titled 1969 debut brims with the breathtaking, smug vocal harmonies that made them instant superstars. Whether cooing silky odes to the ladies ("Suite: Judy Blue Eyes") or attacking the Man ("Long Time Gone"), CSN project hippie arrogance, oblivious to the blandness of their undercooked folk-pop. On 1970's *Déjà Vu*, they're already burned out—druggy rock-star excesses couldn't have helped—and reduced to the inane "Our House," while later albums verge on the pitiful. Listener beware: There's nothing here from occasional bandmate Neil Young (source of the angry "Ohio"), whose prickly guitar and imperfect singing added the spark his friends lacked.

JON YOUNG

DOWNLOAD: "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes"

ROKY ERICKSON

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HERE BEFORE: THE ROKY ERICKSON COLLECTION

✪✪✪✪

SHOUT! FACTORY

The career of an unstable Texan who sings about Satan, zombies and alligators

Crazy they call Roky Erickson. Well, more musicians should be so crazy. The man has had run-ins with the law, as well as the fellows with the restraining jackets, but the only truly important thing to say about Erickson is he was in the 13th Floor Elevator; you were not. A brain-frying (and -fried) '60s psychedelic garage punk band, the Elevators were Texas blues-soaked and relentless, and their "You're Gonna Miss Me" is an early touchstone on this dazzling double CD. Erickson went on to a ➔

I LOVE THIS CD!

SAMUEL L. JACKSON
ACTOR, PULP FICTION, COACH CARTER

ANGIE STONE
STONE LOVE
J RECORDS

"She can righteously sing. So many people these days are just studio artists. But not her—she has an incredible voice."

Drive-By Truckers: "Isn't it fun when we all hallucinate the same thing?"

JUNKYARD DOGS

Two early CDs by *Blender*'s favorite southern rockers

DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS

GANGSTABILLY ✪✪✪

PIZZA DELIVERANCE ✪✪✪✪

NEW WEST

THE DRIVE-BY Truckers are an enigma wrapped in a paradox—left to soak in a vat of Jack Daniel's. Good ol' boys from Alabama who espouse liberal values, they're also hip-hop fans whose breakthrough, 2001's *Southern Rock Opera*, was a concept tribute to Lynyrd Skynyrd. As these two reissues show, they started off as country rockers, but country rockers who sang about unlikely topics: sandwiches, Steve McQueen and punker G.G. Allin's fondness for shoving a microphone where the sun doesn't shine.

By the time of DBT's debut in 1998, singer-songwriter and guitarist drinking-buddies Patterson Hood and Mike Cooley had played together for years. As a result, *Gangstabilly* has a ragged assurance that calls to mind the musical shambling of the Faces, an equally booze-fueled band. "Wife Beater" and "Why Henry Drinks" are both fine examples of Hood's ability to plainly, evocatively detail tragic small-town lives. But the music is conservative—Hood and Cooley weren't ready yet to screw around with their country legacy. The CD also sounds as if it was recorded in two days, which it was.

For *Pizza Deliverance* the next year, they had five days of studio time—a luxury that prompted Hood, worried the music would turn slick, to post a sign: NO STEELY DAN. To compensate, he bellows loudly enough on "Nine Bullets" to be heard clear across the Mason-Dixon line.

The record boasts a newfound sense of adventure and some of Hood's best songs, including a creepy tale of two aging, drug-addict swingers, "Margo and Harold," and the Crazy Horse–invoking "Company I Keep." Cooley, meanwhile, almost trumps Hood with "One of These Days," a song Bruce Springsteen might have written had he grown up Southern and bitter. No matter how bleak the sentiment, the songs are presented with the rousing, joyous enthusiasm of people who know they've hit their stride.

CLARK COLLIS

DOWNLOAD: "The Company I Keep," "The Night G.G. Allin Came to Town"

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: STEPHANIE CHERNIKOWSKI; COURTESY OF NEW WEST RECORDS; JEAN-PAUL AUSSENARD/WIREIMAGE.COM

Mick Mars auditions for the title role in *Weekend at Bernie's III*.

LEWD AND CRÜED

Hair-metal heroes' comeback: too much hair, not enough metal

MÖTLEY CRÜE

RED, WHITE & CRÜE ✪✪

MÖTLEY/HIP-O

GIVEN THEIR TIME-consuming, concentration-sapping penchant for having sex with anything that moved—and snorting anything that didn't—it's something of a mystery how Mötley Crüe managed to crack the Top 40 singles chart seven times in their heyday. The mystery only deepens upon listening to this reunion tour–commemorating, 37-track compilation.

True, "Dr. Feelgood" demonstrates that Aerosmith never had a monopoly on metal-funk swagger, while "Shout at the Devil" is the perfect showcase for both Mick Mars's chainsaw riffing and singer Vince Neil's bombastic yowling. And the joyfully lubricious "Girls, Girls, Girls" would top any list of Great Rock Songs About Tittie Bars.

But the band's first Top 40 hit, the galumphing, novelty-ish cover of "Smokin' in the Boys' Room," serves as a reminder that the band's appeal had as much to do with their screw-you attitude and rock & roll theatrics as with their songwriting or shredding skills. Actually, despite their hard-partying rep, many of the tracks are off-puttingly sweet: The mawkish "Without You" is as lame as the lamest track from any of the even-lamer bands that followed in the Crüe's wake.

However, disc 1 is *Led Zep IV*, *Back in Black* and *Appetite for Destruction* all rolled into one compared with disc 2, which tracks with unnecessary vigor the band's '90s decline and the arrival of substitute singer John Corabi. The best that can be said about most of this material is that longtime producer Bob Rock disproves the adage that says you can't polish a turd.

Meanwhile, of the three newly recorded songs, the Simple Plan–cowritten "If I Die Tomorrow" is catchily anthemic but anonymous, while "Sick Love Song" is just anonymous. Finally, their cover of the Stones' "Street Fighting Man" is notable only for being even more unpleasantly bludgeoning than their previous molestations of the Sex Pistols' "Anarchy in the U.K." and the Beatles' "Helter Skelter"—a fact that, as those tracks are also included here, is all too easy to confirm. Mötley Crüe can apparently ruin songs from any decade.

CLARK COLLIS

DOWNLOAD: "Girls, Girls, Girls," "Dr. Feelgood"

long career of monster-movie-evoking, Luciferous music, fat slabs of rock riffs topped by vocals that sound great but—let's be honest—sometimes also a *leetle* creepy. The latest of this music, from the mid-'90s, sounds like ZZ Top paying tribute to Wes Craven. It's good.

RJ SMITH

DOWNLOAD: "Fire Engine," "Don't Shake Me, Lucifer," "It's a Cold Night for Alligators"

THE KINKS

A SOAP OPERA ✪✪✪

SLEEPWALKER ✪✪

KOCH

Jaded British kook parks his self-hatredmobile in the U.S. charts

In the '70s, Ray Davies was on a bottle of Hennessy and a nervous breakdown a day, baffling his guitarist brother Dave with ever more outlandish ideas for rock operas. Still, 1975's *A Soap Opera* took the cake, a musical about a rock star who assumes an ordinary office worker's identity. Varied, inventive pop with a touch of Broadway leavens the glimpse into Ray's inner blackness, a musical quality absent from 1977's lumpen, pub-rocking *Sleepwalker*, full of bitter, nocturnal observations on failure and madness, plus—among the bonus tracks—an envious dig at Johnny-come-lately New Wavers in "Prince of the Punks." Ironically, Ray's pain gave the Kinks their biggest U.S. hit album since the mid-'60s, and signaled a chart renaissance that ended only with 1984's *Word of Mouth*.

TONY POWER

DOWNLOAD: *Sleepwalker*: "Juke Box Music"; *Soap Opera*: "Have Another Drink"

THE MICE

FOR ALMOST EVER SCOOTER ✪✪✪✪

SCAT

Jangle-pop relic of the mid-'80s, fossilized in excellent condition

In 1985 there were dozens of little regional marvels like the Mice: a Cleveland trio with one foot in the jangle-happy "paisley underground," one hand in the cookie jar of '70s power-pop, one ear on the headlong indie rock blaring out of Minneapolis and no part anywhere near the charts. But their album and EP, collected here, became cult favorites in Ohio—they were a big influence on Guided By Voices—and, gradually, beyond. The band has aged much better than its peers, mostly because of Bill Fox's zippy, watertight songwriting (operative principle: you can never have too many hooks) and wall-of-chime guitar. And it's heartening to hear a shout-along anthem whose chorus goes "I'm not proud of the USA."

The Mice: Actual size.

DOUGLAS WOLK

DOWNLOAD: "Bye-Bye, Kitty Cat," "Felicia"

RANK & FILE

SUNDOWN ✪✪✪✪

LONG GONE DEAD ✪✪✪✪

RANK AND FILE ✪

COLLECTORS' CHOICE

Maverick purveyors of worst-named subgenre ever: cowpunk!

When hardcore broke out of Southern California back in 1980, members of a pair of defunct punk bands—the Dils and the Nuns—joined forces to do the most radical thing they could think of. They stopped playing fast, put on cowboy hats and started playing country music. Rank & File was founded by brothers Chip associates went on to the Breeders, Zwan, Tortoise, Bonnie Prince Billy and Gastr Del Sol, among others, and their technique—a precise trudge that shifts violently from ultrasensitive quietness to devastating noise—spawned the "slow-core" aesthetic of bands from Low to Mogwai.

DOUGLAS WOLK

DOWNLOAD: "Good Morning, Captain," "Nosferatu Man," "Breadcrumb Trail"

BURIED TREASURE

UNEARTHING LOST CLASSICS

SLINT

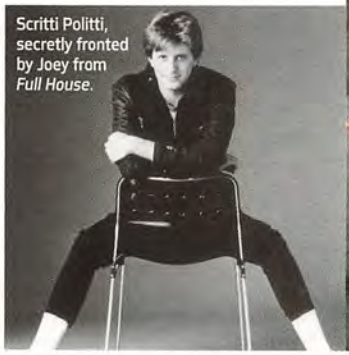
SPIDERLAND ✪✪✪✪

TOUCH AND GO, 1991

The six epic, crawlingly slow riffs-with-spoken-prose-poems that make up the second and final album by this Louisville, Kentucky, quartet (reunited for a brief March tour) laid the groundwork for plenty of the next 15 years' worth of indie rock. Slint members and

MÖTLEY CRÜE: P.R. BROWN; THE MICE: JOHN RODRIGUEZ; CD: MR. SNUGGLES

The Kinks: "Hey, wait, guys! There's no pool there!"



Scritti Politti, secretly fronted by Joey from *Full House*.

and Tony Kinman (who furnished most of the songs and great vocal harmonies) and punk-steeped guitarist Alejandro Escovedo (later of True Believers). Their 1982 debut, *Sundown*, was flat, driving cowpunk. They'd moved to Texas and absorbed the rockin' roots music of native sons Buddy Holly and Bobby Fuller. They identified with the poor ("Rank and File") and with hungry animals that only come out at night ("Coyote"). By 1984's *Long Gone Dead*, Escovedo was long gone, a steel guitar twangs throughout and a loose-limbed fatalism ("It Don't Matter") sets in. The Kinmans released *Rank and File* in 1987, an attempt at arena rock. Remember them for the first two records, and as a band that taught indie rockers how to listen to George Jones.

RJ SMITH

DOWNLOAD: "The Sound of the Rain"

SCRITTI POLITTI

EARLY ✪✪✪✪

ROUGH TRADE

Smartypants Brits mixed punk guitars with songs about books and sandwich meat

The name is phony Italian for "political writing"; they landed a 1985 American dance-pop smash, "Perfect Way." When not hanging with French *philosophes*, auteur Green Gartside led his band through any number of sides and oddities on the outskirts of England's arty punk movement. The disparate tracks here range from 1978 to 1981, all amateur guitar and professional-quality ranting, ragged indie-vidualism and DIY "Messthetics" (as one song is called). From hand-pressed minihits (opener "Skank Bloc Bologna") through abstract articulacy (check "Bibbly-o-Tek"), they make their way toward jangly loveliness, culminating in "The 'Sweetest Girl.'" They might have eventually discovered the Northwest Passage that led from Mekons to Duran Duran, but has anyone ever made prettier demands that everything must change, paused somewhere between conceptual art and New Wave heaven?

RENE VIENET

DOWNLOAD: "Scritlocks Door," "The 'Sweetest Girl,'" "Lions After Slumber"

SPOONIE GEE

GODFATHER OF HIP-HOP ✪✪✪

OL' SKOOL FLAVA

Old-school loverboy pioneers the chorus-free rap, fails to evolve

Back when all you needed to be a successful rapper was a playground rhyme scheme and a healthy self-image, Harlem's Spoonie Gee made a name with a seemingly endless fusillade of boasts—"The babymaker/the woman taker/the cool kid/the heartbreaker"—that at the time passed for bad-boy. His debut single, 1979's "Spoonin' Rap," was a no-fidelity masterpiece, thumbing its nose at both verse-chorus structure and the ostentatious disco sounds of the day; follow-ups "Love Rap" and ➔

INDIE 500

Great best-of from the most stable band in underground rock

YO LA TENGO

PRISONERS OF LOVE ✪✪✪✪

MATADOR

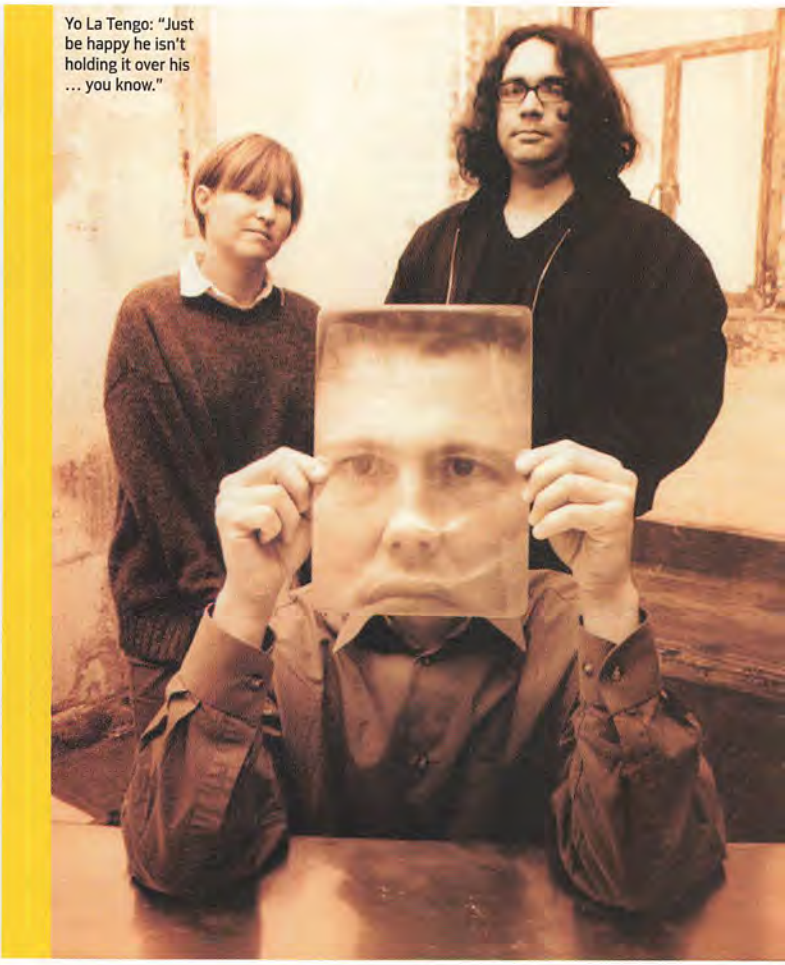
YOU COULD PROBABLY put together a chronological single-disc Yo La Tengo greatest-hits with one killer song after another—but then it wouldn't sound like a Yo La Tengo album. They love digressions, textures, drones and wig-outs as much as songs, and other people's songs as much as their own. With 1993's *Painful*, they found their signature blend of spacey and homey: serene, bottom-heavy rhythms pumped up into gently rolling grooves, supporting Ira Kaplan's frantic but skinny noise guitar and their three shy, humanly frail voices.

As underground rock's aesthetics have mutated, the Hoboken, New Jersey, trio has remained as reliable as a favorite aunt and uncle. (Kaplan and drummer Georgia Hubley have been married for decades, and play like it.) So this loose 21-year retrospective loop-de-loops all over their catalogue for its first two discs, hitting a lot of high points but incorporating lesser-known tracks that relax the pace. The third disc is a lagniappe for fans: rarities, remakes and a few extra dips into their enormous repertoire of covers.

More than any other first-rate band, YLT wear their record collections on their sleeves, paying homage to their idols: Almost every feedback guitar solo Kaplan has ever played kneels before the Velvet Underground's "I Heard Her Call My Name." Surprisingly, though, YLT doesn't sound much like anyone else. The humming pulse they've developed with longtime bassist James McNew underscores almost all of *Prisoners of Love*, and holds it together; the lesson they've learned from being record fiends is that standout songs are fine, but making an album flow means never having to hit the "next track" button.

DOUGLAS WOLK

DOWNLOAD: "From a Motel 6," "Upside-Down"



Yo La Tengo: "Just be happy he isn't holding it over his … you know."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MARTIN BRADING; KOCH RECORDS; CHRISTIAN LANTRY

Super Furry Animals, during their parking-lot-attendant day jobs.

"The Big Beat" posited hip-hop as cocky courtship ritual. (This best-of unfortunately omits some essentials, including "New Rap Language.") After Run-DMC kicked hip-hop into pop, Spoonie was energized by new producers—notably Teddy Riley on "Hit Man." But his flow, once the pinnacle of smooth, remained stuck in yesteryear, a reminder of how simple it once was.

JON CARAMANICA

DOWNLOAD: "Love Rap," "Hit Man"

SUICIDE

A WAY OF LIFE ✪✪✪
WHY BE BLUE? ✪✪

BLAST FIRST/MUTE

Electronic fear-punks who pioneered bleak industrial music, then detoured into ... disco?

In 30-plus years, Martin Rev (who plays menacing, gluey loops on synthesizers) and Alan Vega (who groans and mutters like a zombie Elvis) have made only five studio albums. They're generally more interested in attitude (badass sociopaths) and tone than in songs, so their third and fourth discs are basically status reports on the gear Rev was then mauling. The crunching beats of 1988's *A Way of Life*, a nod to the industrial scene that came to idolize Suicide, trump the chintzy Eurodisco of 1992's *Why Be Blue?*, on which Vega regrettably tries to rap. These CDs append snarling live shows from 1987 and 1989: Suicide in their element, pissing off a crowd.

DOUGLAS WOLK

DOWNLOAD: *A Way of Life*: "Surrender"
Why Be Blue?: "On Fire [live]"

I LOVE THIS CD!

LAURA PREPON
ACTRESS, *THAT '70S SHOW*

THE WALKMEN
BOWS & ARROWS
RECORD COLLECTION

"Danny Masterson is always turning me on to new stuff, and the Walkmen are one of his current favorites. He played them for me and I was instantly down."

Suicide ... or the Strokes in 2035?

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS

SONGBOOK: THE SINGLES VOLUME ONE ✪✪✪

XL

At last! A reason to dust off that English/Welsh dictionary

Conspiracy theory–obsessed Welshmen with a fondness for singing in their native tongue, dressing like Bigfoot onstage and mining the soft side of '60s psychedelia, Super Furry Animals are unlikely candidates for producing a hook-filled singles comp. Yet, from the Beach Boys harmonizing of "Rings Around the World" to the early Pink Floyd weirdness of "Ysbeidiau Heulog," SFA's output worms its way into the brain quicker than you can say, well, "Ysbeidiau Heulog." Pick of the bunch is the Steely Dan–sampling "The Man Don't Give a Fuck," a rousing showcase for both Gruff Rhys's pastoral vocalizing and the enduring power of the four-letter word.

CLARK COLLIS

DOWNLOAD: "Rings Around the World," "The Man Don't Give a Fuck"

BLENDER APPROVED

The best reissues of the last few months

NINE INCH NAILS
THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL
INTERSCOPE

Trent Reznor's goth-rock masterpiece—a tear-stained portrait of violence and self-loathing as frightening today as it was 10 years ago.

R.E.M.
AUTOMATIC FOR THE PEOPLE
WARNER BROS.

Purists grumbled when the pride of indie rock went major, but this stunner proves R.E.M. remained as inscrutable and as beautiful as ever.

THE SLITS
CUT
KOCH

Eccentric, original and nude on their cover art, the first important female punk band wrote piercing songs about shoplifting and lust.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
THE COMPLETE MOTOWN SINGLES VOL 1: 1959–1961
HIP-O SELECT/MOTOWN SELECT

A luscious six-CD box, available only at hip-oselect.com, documents the origins of America's greatest label.

JIMMY WEBB

THE MOON'S A HARSH MISTRESS: JIMMY WEBB IN THE SEVENTIES ✪✪✪

RHINO

Literate Oklahoma songwriting giant eases through the Me Decade

Jimmy Webb is the hippie Burt Bacharach, a gifted songwriter and producer who kept Tin Pan Alley's flame burning deep into the rock era. His most indelible songs ("Wichita Lineman," "MacArthur Park") were popularized by others, but Webb had a sporadic, spotty solo career, whose most fruitful period is comprehensively surveyed in this five-disk box. On early albums like *Words and Music* (1970) and *And So: On* (1971), his shapely melodies are nearly buried in schlock; as the decade wore on, his arrangements grew more zanily elaborate. The best was *Land's End* (1974), a nutty song cycle featuring a studio-pro cast of thousands, "philosophy" ("Our lives are just bubbles of time/They're rainbow colored") and Webb's very own Wagnerian mini-symphony, performed by the London Philharmonic.

JODY ROSEN

DOWNLOAD: "The Highwayman," "Galveston," "By the Time I Get to Phoenix"

BERT WILLIAMS

THE EARLY YEARS, 1901–1909 ✪✪✪

ARCHEOPHONE

Treasures from before Mr. Nobody became America's first great black Broadway star

As history alone, the final installment of Archeophone's complete digitization of Bert Williams's recordings is a triumph. Not only was comedian-singer Williams the first African-American stage and recording star, with 33 hits between 1902 and 1922, but he's also lasted better than most of his bigger white peers. Given the limited dynamics of these expertly restored acoustic discs and cylinders (which brighten as the three-CD series moves forward), that's not to claim he still sounds as vivid as he must have then. His perfectly delivered loser's lament, "Nobody," however, retains extraordinary irony and pathos, and throughout his tone and timing are a wonder. Though compelled to perform in blackface, Williams never downplayed intelligence, craft or edge. It's impressive that he ever got the subtly barbed "She's Getting More Like the White Folks" past his bosses.

ROBERT CHRISTGAU

DOWNLOAD: "Nobody," "I'm Tired of Eating in the Restaurants"

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: DEIRDRE O'CALLAGHAN; PAT POPE; BOTTOM: PREPON: KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM; MOTOWN; JASON WARE

REISSUES IN BRIEF BY JON YOUNG

Ray Charles, before his star turn in *Collateral*.

RAY CHARLES

MORE MUSIC FROM RAY ✪✪✪

RHINO

Don't be deterred by compilation overkill: Charles is always worth hearing. While the duets from last year's valediction generate heat, they're no match for robust oldies like "I Believe to My Soul" and "Leave My Woman Alone," where Charles fuses blues, gospel and jazz to invent soul music. Slacker essential: "Let's Go Get Stoned."

CHICAGO

LOVE SONGS ✪

RHINO

Chicago's gooey tunes portray romance as an activity for morons. From "Hard to Say I'm Sorry" to "Color My World" to "Wishing You Were Here," the greeting-card sentiments and perfumed melodies are uniformly depressing—if this is love, it's incredibly boring. Worst compilation ever? Maybe!

MARSHALL TUCKER BAND

ANTHOLOGY: THE FIRST 30 YEARS ✪✪

SHOUT! FACTORY

Lacking the instrumental sizzle of the Allmans or the redneck smarts of early Lynyrd Skynyrd, Marshall Tucker represents the dimwitted wing of southern rock. Including the mellow hit "Heard It in a Love Song," this endless two-disc history features sprawling guitar solos (plus flute!—not very redneck) and cliché-slinging tracks such as "Where a Country Boy Belongs."

DOUG SAHM

GROOVERS PARADISE ✪✪✪✪

COLLECTORS' CHOICE

Tex-Mex genius Sahm, who could wail everything from uptown blues to honky-tonk country, flirted with mainstream rock in 1974, recruiting Creedence Clearwater's rhythm section. Happily, he failed to curb his eccentricities: Whether celebrating "enchiladas and barbeque" in the toe-tapping title track or waxing nostalgic on the smoky "Houston Chicks," Sahm's barroom crooning is soulful and true.

SHONEN KNIFE

PRETTY LITTLE BAKA GUY ✪✪✪

OGLIO

Beloved by Kurt Cobain and Sonic Youth, the all-female (and still active) Japanese trio made sweetly askew punk-pop when today's crop was in diapers. Their 1986 album—the best of four reissued—soothes jangled nerves with the irony-free good vibes of "Ice Cream City" and "Riding on the Rocket." Music doesn't get any more cheerful.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

DANCEHALL STRINGBUSTERS! CRUNCHY GUITAR INTROS FROM THE '60S ✪✪✪

SUNDAZED

Some are crunchier than others. Although the savage, distorted attack of Link Wray ("Jack the Ripper") and the Secrets ("Twin Exhaust") can induce cold chills, Wes Dakus, Jay Bee and the Kats, and other forgotten souls stick to milder surf and blues riffs, perhaps afraid neighbors will complain about the noise.

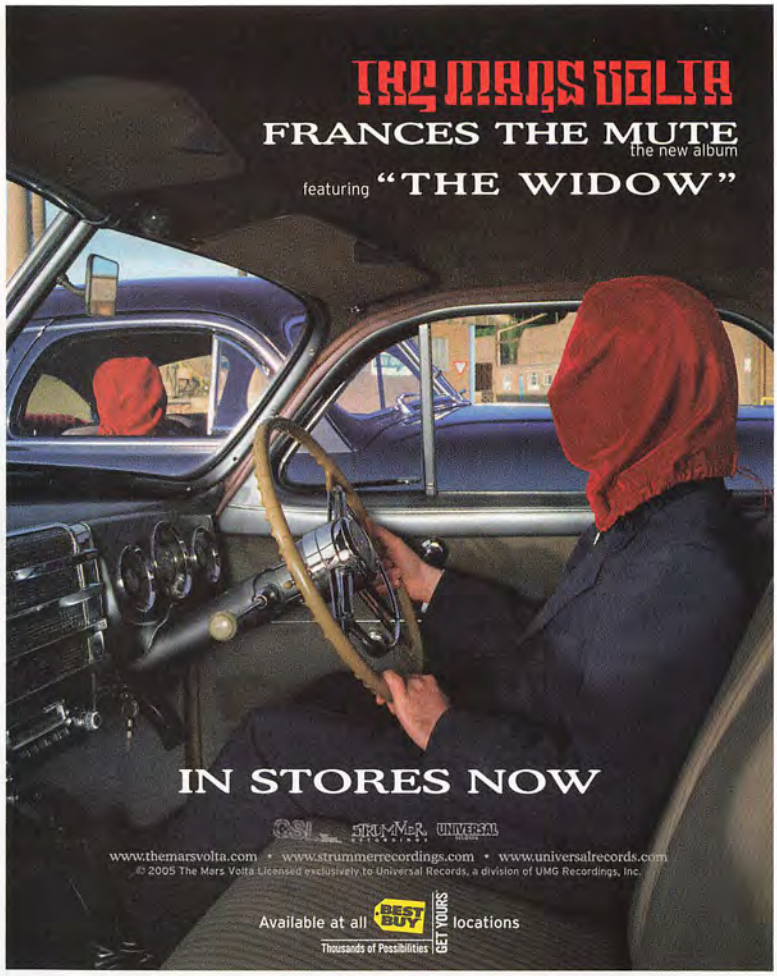
VARIOUS ARTISTS

THE KINGS OF FUNK ✪✪✪✪

RAPSTER/BBE

Kings and queens, actually. Compiled in part by Wu-Tang Clan mastermind the RZA, this 20-track set skips obvious choices for a more offbeat version of funk. Highlights include MFSB's exuberant take on Sly Stone's "Family Affair" and Lyn Collins's slow-burning "Do Your Thing," co-starring a king of funk named James Brown.

COURTESY OF ATLANTIC RECORDS


THE MARS VOLTA
FRANCES THE MUTE
the new album
featuring "THE WIDOW"
IN STORES NOW
www.themarsvolta.com • www.strummerrecordings.com • www.universalrecords.com
© 2005 The Mars Volta Licensed exclusively to Universal Records, a division of UMG Recordings, Inc.
Available at all BEST BUY locations
Thousands of Possibilities GET YOURS

Kings of Leon
Aha Shake Heartbreak
"Perhaps the finest American band of this decade."
– The Times of London
Featuring "The Bucket" and "Four Kicks." In stores now.
www.kingsofleon.com www.rcarecords.com
The RCA Records Label is a Unit of BMG / Tmk(s) ® Registered Marca(s) Registrada(s) RCA Trademark Management S.A. / BMG logo is a registered trademark of BMG Music / © 2005 BMG
available at:
TOWER RECORDS

U2

Four earnest lads who came from Dublin, Ireland, with a small dream: world conquest! BY TONY POWER

EVERY ORIGINAL CD REVIEWED

FORMED IN 1976 after drummer Larry Mullen Jr. posted a notice on a bulletin board at Dublin's Temple Mount School, U2 bestrode '80s rock in plaid, sleeveless shirts and mullets, defined by the breathless vocals of Paul "Bono" Hewson, the FX-laden guitar of Dave "the Edge" Evans, and the uncool hair of bassist Adam Clayton. The bleeding-heart flipside of Duran Duran's decadence, they fed the world while filling stadiums with whooping fans, whose upheld Bics lit the way for the conscientious epics of Radiohead and Coldplay.

After remaking themselves in the '90s with irony, rave music and mascara, they returned to their core values (echoey guitars, bombast, global crusades) as well as to the top of the charts: *How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb* sold 840,000 copies in its first week of release last November and entered the charts at No. 1. Sometimes the good guys win.

U2 in 1987 (left to right): Adam Clayton, Larry Mullen Jr., Bono and the Edge.

ESSENTIAL

THE JOSHUA TREE *ISLAND, 1987*

★★★★★

The apex of U2's earnest period, an alliance of canyon-esque guitars with regal songs. Gospel touches ("I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For"), blues-tinted meditations on violence ("Bullet the Blue Sky") and even country rock ("Trip Through Your Wires") testify to a growing obsession with America, good and bad. America responded, giving U2 their only two No. 1 singles and sales of 20 million. Sole debit point: It cemented U2's image as glum and worthy do-gooders.
Download: "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For," "With or Without You"

ACHTUNG BABY *ISLAND, 1991*

★★★★★

Conceived in Berlin amid heated arguments between the "hats" (Bono and the Edge) and the "haircuts" (Mullen and Clayton) at a time when Edge's first marriage was crumbling, it mixed club beats with sleazy nighttime rock, plus Bono's first lyrics about sex and stardom. The singer called this first in a dance-influenced trilogy "the sound of four men chopping down *The Joshua Tree*." It proved U2 had the measure of the hedonistic decade to come.
Download: "One," "The Fly," "Even Better Than the Real Thing"

ALL THAT YOU CAN'T LEAVE BEHIND *INTERSCOPE, 2001*

★★★★★

Given the failure of *Pop* (the last of their dance trilogy), the global hegemony of hip-hop, and a health crisis that threatened Bono's voice and then his life, the omens couldn't have been worse. But U2's tenth studio album restored their relevance with a modern respraying of their sound. "Beautiful Day" is an old-school, chest-beating rocker; "Stuck in a Moment" is a pop-soul radio smooch featuring Bono as Dusty Springfield. The sound of four men pretending they never made *Zooropa*.
Download: "Stuck in a Moment," "Kite"

GREAT

WAR *ISLAND, 1983*

★★★★

MATURITY BEGINS

With the Clash splitting and U2's hipper peers (Echo & the Bunnymen, the Psychedelic Furs) too haughty to make the effort, U2 were headed toward stadium status, if they could bury the strife that characterized *October*. They did: Seething with certainty and paced like a rock concert, their third album pivoted on the rousing "New Year's Day" and ended with the spiraling chant of "'40.'" If an album could punch the air, this one would.
Download: "New Year's Day," "Two Hearts Beat as One," "'40'"

THE BEST OF 1980–1990 & B-SIDES *ISLAND, 1998*

★★★★

Except for "I Will Follow," U2's recap of their first decade ignores the first two albums but resurrects the soufflé-light pop gem "The Sweetest Thing" from b-side obscurity. Two things become clear: 1. U2 have no difficulty writing an anthem. 2. Adam Clayton's bass playing never got past the "bum-bum-bum" stage. Seek the two-disc version for their rousing treatment of Patti Smith's "Dancing Barefoot."
Download: "The Sweetest Thing," "Desire," "Sunday Bloody Sunday"

HOW TO DISMANTLE AN ATOMIC BOMB *INTERSCOPE, 2004*

★★★★

Their iPod ads delivered millions of dollars' worth of free publicity, and the heavy riffing of "Vertigo" did the rest as U2's rockingest album since *Achtung Baby* debuted at No. 1 in 21 countries. Bono's political agendas (Middle East peace on "Love and Peace or Else," world poverty on "Crumbs From Your Table") and personal tragedies ("Sometimes You Can't Make It on Your Own" eulogizes his father, who died in 2001) come alive on a record full of energy and choruses.
Download: "Sometimes You Can't Make It on Your Own," "City of Blinding Lights"

BLEDDYN BUTCHER/REX USA

GOOD

BOY *ISLAND, 1980*
✪✪✪

U2 built on their reputation as an exciting live act with this unique infusion of fashionably chilly New Wave sonics and an unfashionably innocent heart. Bono, the Edge and Mullen's membership in an evangelical Christian group was an influence. So was Patti Smith's declamatory punk poetry.
Download: "I Will Follow," "Out of Control"

THE UNFORGETTABLE FIRE
ISLAND, 1984
✪✪✪

U2's first sonic revolution, and first record to get airplay, was fomented with the help of ambient music egghead Brian Eno. With the Edge's guitar seemingly everywhere at once, U2 eschew flag-waving for slow burning, and "Bad" builds to a rapturous intensity ("I'm wide awake!"). Drugs are naughty; Martin Luther King was good, concludes Bono.
Download: "Pride (In the Name of Love)"

RATTLE AND HUM *ISLAND, 1988*
✪✪✪

U2 hymn the heartland with live tracks from the *Joshua Tree* tour and studio recordings made in the U.S.A. Brilliant (the raunch of "Desire") and wearying (the patronizing "Angel of Harlem"). Also led to a pretentious movie.
Download: "Helter Skelter [live]"

THE BEST OF 1990–2000
ISLAND/INTERSCOPE, 2002
✪✪✪

Patchy selection from U2's patchy decade, worth considering for non-album tracks such as the *Achtung*-era "Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me, Kill Me," but not the new track, "Electrical Storm," a shocking dud. Tellingly, Bono declined to promote it.
Download: "Beautiful Day"

BE CAREFUL

OCTOBER *ISLAND, 1981*
✪✪

The closest they came to splitting—Clayton's casual-sex-and-reefer lifestyle annoyed his abstemious mates—and a musical misstep, where foggy atmospherics strive to conceal pallid performances: Bono had lost his lyrics notebook on tour.
Download: "Gloria," "Scarlet"

UNDER A BLOOD RED SKY
ISLAND, 1984
✪✪

It cemented their reputation as showmen, and even broke the Top 30, yet Bono's introduction to "Sunday Bloody Sunday" ("This song is not a rebel song!") would become a proclamation U2 spent the '90s trying to disavow. A product of its time, like their mullets.
Download: "11 O'Clock Tick Tock"

ZOOROPA *ISLAND, 1993*
✪✪

Was the 157-date *Zoo TV* tour not enough like hard work? Why not record a new album during the final leg? And while we're at it, let's get the Edge to rap some kind of alienated shopping list over a techno song, call it "Numb," and release it as a single! Hey, where'd everybody go?
Download: "The Wanderer"

POP *ISLAND, 1997*
✪✪

Drunk on experimentation, U2 run out of time (backing vocals to "Staring at the Sun" were recorded in the mastering suite) and burden themselves with a disco album about the death of God. Party on! The hackneyed rave touches are regrettable—dad, why'd you take my Ecstasy?—but the more somber tunes have aged well.
Download: "Staring at the Sun"

FOR FANS ONLY

WIDE AWAKE IN AMERICA
ISLAND, 1985
✪

A superfluous postscript to *The Unforgettable Fire*. The two live tracks—"Bad" and "A Sort of Homecoming"—yearn like crazy, but the two outtakes can now be better enjoyed on *The Best of 1980–1990 & B-Sides*. What is it with U2 and live albums?
Download: "Bad"

MELON: REMIXES FOR PROPAGANDA *ISLAND, 1995*
✪

Dance remixes that flatter neither U2 nor dance music. DJs Paul Oakenfold and Steve Osborne effect the only worthwhile reinvention, throwing out most of "Even Better Than the Real Thing" and substituting a disco riff.
Download: "Even Better Than the Real Thing [The Perfecto Mix]"

PASSENGERS ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACKS I
ISLAND, 1995
✪

Brian Eno took the controls for this electronica interlude, which Bono called "something to trip out to." Italian opera maestro Luciano Pavarotti sings (phoning Bono's house, he mockingly called the singer "God"), and the music bleeps and noodles.
Download: "Miss Sarajevo"

HASTA LA VISTA, BABY!: LIVE FROM MEXICO CITY
ISLAND, 2000
✪

After *Pop*, U2 toured the world dressed as gay pimps—although by the time they reached Mexico they'd overcome the underrehearsed horror of the U.S. shows.
Download: "Discothèque"

FURTHER LISTENING

THE EDGE CAPTIVE: SOUNDTRACK
VIRGIN, 1986
✪✪✪

On the only solo album from a U2er, the hat-loving guitarist is in full axe-tapestry mode, while Sinéad O'Connor trills on the lovely "Heroine." Terrible film, though.
Download: "Heroine," "Djinn"

FURTHER VIEWING

ZOO TV: LIVE FROM SYDNEY
POLYGRAM VIDEO, 1994
✪✪✪✪

In this memento of the third-highest-grossing rock tour ever, jarring slogans (e.g., "Everything You Know Is Wrong") and cable TV overload are turned into amazing visuals, while Bono sends up every rock-frontman cliché in the book.

U2 GO HOME: LIVE FROM SLANE CASTLE
INTERSCOPE, 2003
✪✪✪✪

After the camped-up travesty of *PopMart*, U2's *Elevation* tour stressed the basics (great songs, hard rocking), while the tragic circumstances of this Dublin show (Bono's father had recently died) give it even greater power.

Gang of Four exhort audience to smash state, buy merchandise.

Gang of Four circa 1979 (left to right): Jon King, Dave Allen, Hugo Burnham and Andy Gill.

FRANZ FERDINAND'S DADDIES

GANGLAND

Older and chubbier, funky British punks return to menace their fans

GANG OF FOUR

SHEPHERD'S BUSH EMPIRE, LONDON

JANUARY 28 , 2005 ✪✪✪✪

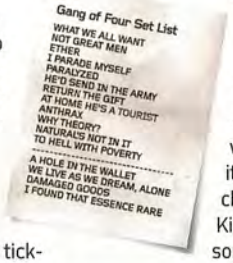
IN A NORMAL week, Jon King is CEO of a multimedia company called World Television Group PLC. Tonight, though, he's on a London stage, steadily beating a broken microwave with an iron bar.

Between thwacks, King barks out lyrics about civil disobedience and military brutality. Eventually, the oven's control panel can take no more and drops to the floor. It's not often a media CEO gets to dismantle a kitchen appliance while 2,000 fans cheer him on.

It's been said that every one of the few people who bought the first Velvet Underground record formed a band. The same idea applies to Gang of Four, four art students in the gray, troubled England of the late 1970s who combined declamatory vocals, itchy funk rhythms, avant-garde sonics and radical politics into a deathlessly influential template.

In the early 1980s, U2, R.E.M. and the Red Hot Chili Peppers were energized by the band. Bono lovingly described them as "hard, angular, bold … a corporation of common sense." Their legacy stretches from Rage Against the Machine's rebel grooves to Franz Ferdinand's pulsing post-punk. If Gang of Four had enjoyed half as much commercial success as the groups they inspired have, their five-date U.K. reunion tour would be filling arenas, not theaters.

But their uncompromising credo—"no corny lyrics, no obvious melodies and no change of key"—was never destined to make them Duran Duran. If there's a financial incentive tonight (after all, the tickets aren't free), it must be a modest one.



Gang of Four Set List

WHAT WE ALL WANT
NOT GREAT MEN
ETHER
I PARADE MYSELF
PARALYZED
HE'D SEND IN THE ARMY
RETURN THE GIFT
AT HOME HE'S A TOURIST
ANTHRAX
WHY THEORY?
NATURALIS NOT IN IT
TO HELL WITH POVERTY

A HOLE IN THE WALLET
WE LIVE AS WE DREAM, ALONE
DAMAGED GOODS
I FOUND THAT ESSENCE RARE

"We're obviously not in it for the money, and we're not in it for nostalgia," Gill insists to *Blender*. "We knew we could be exceptionally good. It was just a question of whether we could pull it off."

So when Andy Gill's savage, stabbing guitar riff heralds the opening song, "What We All Want," the sense of relief is palpable. Now in their 40s, the quartet still prickles with menace. Gill patrols the stage, dueling with Dave Allen's stark bass lines and wrenching his guitar until it sounds like a buzzsaw chewing through metal. King, silent between songs, is obliquely combative, whether pointing accusingly at the audience, jerking violently in a loose approximation of dancing or capering madly across the stage like a drunk trying to outrun a searchlight. Hugo Burnham, a cheerful, chunky figure in sports shirt and sweatpants, looks less like a punk legend than a London taxi driver, but his drumming is beat-perfect.

Jon King: Unreasonably proud of arm span.

They play for just over an hour, wisely snubbing anything recorded after 1983, when Gill and King, the only remaining original members, lost their abrasive edge and most of their fans. Maybe it's the sparse melodies, maybe it's the lyrics about Marxism, hydrogen bombs and the British army, but few bands have covered Gang of Four songs, preferring to imitate their neurotic, metallic grooves. You could reissue the yowling punk-goes-to-the-disco anthem "To Hell With Poverty" tomorrow and most people would mistake it for a new single by the Rapture.

After encoring with an uncharacteristically chaotic "I Found That Essence Rare," the closest they get to a pop song, Gang of Four finally relax. Burnham sweeps his hand towards his colleagues and announces with a beam of pride, "My band!" However successful their rebirth, though, its days are numbered. "Anybody who wants to see us better get on with it," Gill warns. "We won't be hanging around forever."

After a U.S. tour that includes a high-profile Coachella slot and a double CD of re-recorded old songs plus remixes by such admirers as Massive Attack and the Futureheads, they'll head back to their day jobs: Gill's a producer, Allen runs a creative consultancy in Oregon and Burnham teaches art in Boston. King, meanwhile, will return to using microwaves for nothing more strenuous than reheating coffee. *DORIAN LYNSKEY*

TOP AND BOTTOM: PHIL WALLIS/NME/IPC + SYNDICATION; TOP RIGHT: ADRIAN BOOT/LFI-AB

Perry Farrell: "Man, Navarro gets *all* the groupies!"

SO ADDICTED

The alt-rock icons narrate their drug-fueled rise and even-more-drug-fueled demise. BY CLARK COLLIS

WHORES
AN ORAL BIOGRAPHY OF PERRY FARRELL AND JANE'S ADDICTION

By Brendan Mullen

★★★ *DA CAPO PRESS, $26*

Pick any page at random from *Whores* and you're almost guaranteed to find lines like: "He'd end up with these incredible tracks down his arms," or "Dave would just shoot nonstop."

The "Dave" in question is Dave Navarro, guitarist for Jane's Addiction and the band's most committed junkie during their early-'90s heyday, although, as this oral history of the band shows, there was stiff competition for the title. Indeed, *Whores* acts as a fine alt-rock companion to Mötley Crüe's similarly narco-fueled, quote-based *The Dirt*. There are even times when *Whores* exceeds *The Dirt* in gross-out terms, notably the anecdote that finds singer Perry Farrell, pissed that one of his roommates was stealing his food, masturbating over some string cheese (later eaten).

Unfortunately, while entertaining, the deluge of depravity overpowers any discussion of Jane's genre-bending musical approach or Farrell's founding of Lollapalooza. True, it is pointed out that they "never really got their due as the impetus for 'alternative' music coming into the mainstream." But neither, frankly, do they get it in *Whores*, which more often resembles a pharmacist's inventory list than an authoritative history.

CAN'T STOP WON'T STOP

By Jeff Chang

★★★★★ *ST. MARTIN'S PRESS, $28*

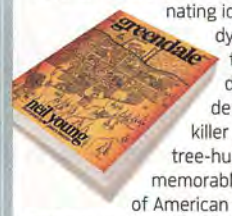
Journalist Jeff Chang's hip-hop history rarely stutters in its buckshot-wide aim. Stretching from the early-'70s Bronx's blitzkrieged streets to Jamaica's sound-system battles to contemporary rap's blinged-out boulevards, *CSWS* chronicles the rise of MCs and DJs, in particular those with both cadence and political cred, and examines events that sparked lyrical furies: the L.A. riots, Bensonhurst and the shootings by "subway vigilante" Bernard Goetz. In Chang's hands, hip-hop's story isn't just rhyme and rhythm; it's a social history etched in a high-top fade. *YANCEY STRICKLER*

GREENDALE

By Neil Young and James Mazzeo

★★★★ *SANCTUARY PUBLISHING, $24*

Greendale is the final element in a multimedia series—following an album, tour and film—based on Neil Young's keenly imagined fictional Northern California town. The alternating idealism and dysfunction of the Greendale residents (cop-killer Jed and tree-hugger Sun are memorable polarities of American youth) are brought to vivid life by illustrative woodcut biographical portraits and abstract paintings by town Vietnam vet Earl Green (actually collaborator James Mazzeo). It's a nice souvenir—but you'll want to make the musical tour first. *MICHAEL ODELL*



CINDERELLA'S BIG SCORE

By Maria Raha

★★★ *SEAL, $18*

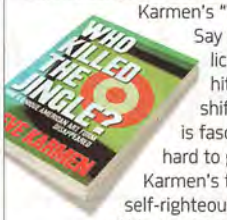
With its 'zine-y profiles of girl punkers, *Score* is a good primer for ax-strapped feminist campfire girls who suspect there's wilder cherry-bomb rock out there than Avril Lavigne. If the flow sometimes toggles from boosterism to book report, it's still cool to see the Lunachicks bunched with Lydia Lunch and Bratmobile packed with Poly Styrene. Chapters on undergrounders like the Gits, Team Dresch and the Butchies give fresh ink to rebel girls whose cult-appeal begs deeper inquiry than the boy-journo staple "What's it like to be 'women in rock?'" *LAURA SINAGRA*

WHO KILLED THE JINGLE?:
HOW A UNIQUE AMERICAN ART FORM DISAPPEARED

By Steve Karmen

★ *HAL LEONARD, $23*

Over the past 40 years, ad execs have gradually replaced customized commercial jingles like author Steve Karmen's "When You Say Bud" with licensed pop hits. How this shift happened is fascinating, but hard to glean from Karmen's tedious, self-righteous memoir of his rise from scoring porn movies to squabbling with performance-rights organizations over ad royalties. His argument essentially comes down to "You damn kids today, with your computers and your 'edgy' music!" *DOUGLAS WOLK*



BLENDER APPROVED

The best books of the past months

TORI AMOS: PIECE BY PIECE

By Tori Amos and Ann Powers
BROADWAY BOOKS, $24

Ethereal songbird ruminates on life and "Dionysian catharsis."

NIRVANA: THE RECORDING SESSIONS

By Rob Jovanovic
FIRE FLY PUBLISHING, $20

Authoritative track-by-track dissection of the Seattle grungesters.

THE BEST PART OF A BIG BOOK!

KEITH RICHARDS, ON PROPER BATHROOM BEHAVIOR

"It's really not on, as far as drug etiquette goes, to turn blue in somebody else's john. You suddenly realize that sombody's been in there for like an hour and you 'aven't 'eard a sound, and I think it's such a drag, because I think it's a drag when people do it to me, thumping on the door: 'Are you all right?' 'Yeah! I'm having a fucking crap!'"

From **The High Times Reader,** *edited by Annie Nocenti and Ruth Baldwin. © 2004 Nation Books*

FARRELL: CHRIS CUFFARO; RICHARDS: GRAHAM WILTSHIRE/GETTY IMAGES

"Hi, you called for a creepy handyman?"

THE GOOD!

HAMMER TIME!

Violent revenge is on the menu in this South Korean thriller. As is a live squid! By Clark Collis

OLDBOY

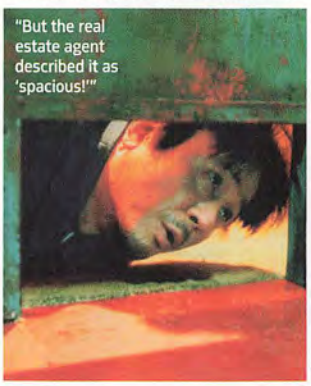
DIRECTED BY Chan-wook Park

STARRING Min-sik Choi, Ji-tae Yu, Hye-jeong Kang

YOU KNOW THOSE movies that claim that no animals were harmed in their making? Well, *Oldboy* is not one of those movies. This becomes very clear when the film's star, Min-sik Choi, walks into a sushi bar and eats a squid that is not only alive but whose legs are still disturbingly slithering around the actor's face while the remainder of its now-detached body is halfway down his gullet.

A miracle of CGI trickery? Nope. In all, four live squid were actually eaten by Choi while filming the scene, although director Chan-wook Park did at least have the decency to thank them when his grotesque but hugely entertaining film won the Grand Prix trophy at Cannes last year. That a movie featuring the most disgusting sequence of real-life consumption since Divine ate a fresh dog turd in *Pink Flamingos* should win such a prestigious award is less surprising when you recall that 2004's Cannes jury was led by Quentin Tarantino.

Indeed, despite being from South Korea, this stylish, violent and punchily scripted whydunnit is effectively the best Quentin Tarantino movie not actually made by the man himself. Choi plays a man snatched off the street and held captive, without explanation, for 15 years. His only company during this ordeal is a television, from which he learns that his wife has been murdered and that he is the chief suspect. Over time he turns himself into the ultimate fighting machine by repeatedly punching the walls of his prison. Finally let loose, Choi beats up a gang, eats the unfortunate squid and then attempts to sexually assault beautiful sushi chef Hye-jeong Kang. Later, via cellphone, he is informed that he has five days to find out just what the hell is going on. If he succeeds, the man responsible for imprisoning him will kill himself. If he fails, our hero's unknown tormentor will kill Kang, with whom, despite the earlier failed molestation, he has become involved.



"But the real estate agent described it as 'spacious!'"

THE MAYHEM IS UNFORGETTABLE.

And that's just the first half hour! True, matters don't actually get any weirder, although they do get much more violent as Choi sets about solving the riddle armed only with his own cunning and, well, a hammer. But, if the mayhem is unforgettable—and it is—then so too is pretty much every other part of this movie, from Choi's gonzo haircut to the many philosophical ruminations on guilt to the oh-my-god-that-did-*not*-just-happen denouement. The resulting thriller is, like those of Tarantino, never merely concerned with who is going to end up sleeping with the fishes—or, if you want to be persnickity, with the mollusks.

THE BAD!

MAN OF THE HOUSE

DIRECTED BY Stephen Herek

STARRING Tommy Lee Jones, Kelli Garner, Christina Milian

Doesn't Tommy Lee Jones ever get bored of playing "grizzled geezer with a heart of gold"? Surely there must be times when he prays to be cast as "grizzled guy with a heart of more grizzle who kills everybody in the final scene." If so, we're betting that prayer remains unanswered by *Man of the House*, in which Jones plays a Texas Ranger who has to protect a group of cheerleaders after they witness a murder. To do so, he pretends to be a cheerleading coach, this apparently being the only way to save them. The only way you could get us into a theater showing *Man of the House*, meanwhile, is with a taser gun.

& THE INDIE!

THE BALLAD OF JACK AND ROSE

DIRECTED BY Rebecca Miller

STARRING Daniel Day-Lewis, Camilla Belle

When not chasing off building crews with a shotgun, Daniel Day-Lewis enjoys a near-perfect life among the ruins of a former commune with his daughter. But after girlfriend Catherine Keener and her two teenage sons move into this Eden, all manner of tensions are let loose, as is—biblical allusion alert!—a copperhead snake. If this film from Rebecca Miller, daughter of playwright Arthur, feels a little stagey, it is very well acted, with the supporting cast all in their own way matching the authenticity of Day-Lewis's Scots accent.

BLENDER APPROVED

The best movies of the past months

BE COOL
Be *very* cool. John Travolta's Chili Palmer muscles in on the music industry.

THE RING II
Before you die, you see the ring … uh … again!

LAST GOOD MOVIE YOU SAW?

DAVE GROHL, FOO FIGHTER
"Dig! I've been in a couple of fucked-up bands. Brian Jones-town Massacre wipes the floor with them."

AND THE REST . . .

DON'T MISS

SIN CITY

DIRECTED BY Frank Miller, Robert Rodriguez

STARRING Bruce Willis, Benicio Del Toro, Clive Owen, Mickey Rourke

THE PITCH: Star-festooned adaptation of comic-book legend Frank Miller's noirish and very, very, very violent series of graphic novels.

THE VERDICT: The footage we've seen, and the presence of Miller as co-director, point to its being faithfully kickass.

KUNG FU HUSTLE

DIRECTOR Stephen Chow

STARRING Stephen Chow, Yuen Wah

THE PITCH: Chop-sockey mayhem ensues in pre-revolutionary China when the residents of an apartment complex come into conflict with the mafia-like Axe Gang.

THE VERDICT: *Shaolin Soccer* auteur Chow utterly convinces in the central role of a gangster hopeful, despite little previous "Hi-yaaaaah!" experience.

MELINDA AND MELINDA

DIRECTED BY Woody Allen

STARRING Will Ferrell, Chloë Sevigny

THE PITCH: A pair of playwrights use the same anecdote about an interrupted dinner party as the starting point for two stories based on the same woman.

THE VERDICT: A decent bounceback for Woody after the below-par *Anything Else*, with a standout performance from Will Ferrell as a lovelorn, limp-obsessed actor.

UNLEASHED

DIRECTED BY Louis Leterrier

STARRING Jet Li, Morgan Freeman, Bob Hoskins

THE PITCH: Raised like a martial-arts-skilled dog, Jet Li has to adjust to life in the normal world after escaping the clutches of his "master," Bob Hoskins.

THE VERDICT: In a largely nonspeaking–but very much not non-hitting–role, Li excels as a man trying to discover his humanity.

DON'T RUSH

GUESS WHO

DIRECTED BY Kevin Rodney Sullivan

STARRING Ashton Kutcher, Bernie Mac

THE PITCH: Bernie Mac is displeased when his daughter announces her intention to marry not just a white-boy doofus—but a white-boy doofus named Ashton Kutcher.

THE VERDICT: No one does hilarious indignation as well as Mac, but we haven't exactly had a shortage of outraged in-law comedies of late.

THE INTERPRETER

DIRECTED BY Sydney Pollack

STARRING Nicole Kidman, Sean Penn

THE PITCH: Cop Sean Penn is called in after UN interpreter Kidman overhears a plot to assassinate an African leader. Feel free to insert a "cunning linguist" joke here.

THE VERDICT: With that cast, it should be a class act. But *Tootsie* director Pollack isn't known for making thrillers or, recently, good films of any sort at all.

KUNG FU HUSTLE: SAEED ADYANI/SONY PICTURES CLASSICS; RING II: GEMMA LA MANA; GROHL: JEFF KRAVITZ/FILMMAGIC.COM

"Let's go beat the crap out of Howdy Doody!"

HIGHLY STRUNG

The *South Park* crew use the power of puppetry to rag on American foreign policy—and Ben Affleck. BY CLARK COLLIS

TEAM AMERICA: WORLD POLICE

PARAMOUNT HOME VIDEO

✪✪✪✪

SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE, not unreasonably, that there are events so terrible they should never become the subject of jokes. But *South Park* creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone are most definitely not among them. So it is that, midway through the marionette-starring *Team America*, a song arrives that flagrantly attempts to mine comic material from one of this country's darkest hours—the release of the movie *Pearl Harbor*.

PUPPETS ARE PUT TO HILARIOUS USE.

"I need you like Ben Affleck needs acting school/He was terrible in that film," croons the film's hero, a Broadway actor turned lovelorn antiterrorist named Gary Johnston. "And now all I can think about is your smile/And that shitty movie too/*Pearl Harbor* sucked and I miss you."

Of course, the pair's lampooning of the bloated pseudo-epic is the least controversial aspect of a movie that depicts the war against terrorism as doing far more harm than good while also showing Hollywood liberals as egomaniacal dickheads or, in the case of Matt Damon, mentally retarded. This attempt to offend viewers of all political stripes may have been partly responsible for the tepid box-office figures of a movie that follows the attempts of the titular elite force (theme song: "America: F**k Yeah!") to thwart the world-destroying plans of thickly accented Korean leader Kim Jong Il (theme song: "I'm So Ronery"). But blame must also go to the fact that most of the film's best moments, from a lengthy puppet sex scene to the priceless *Jerry Maguire*–parodying line "You had me at 'dicks fuck assholes,'" couldn't be shown in trailers.

Certainly, the problem isn't the quality of the jokes. True, the relentless attacks on the likes of Susan Sarandon and Alec Baldwin do wear thin. But for the most part, Parker and Stone's puppets are put to hilariously demented, obscene and/or disgusting use. In particular, anyone who thinks there's nothing funnier than a human drunkenly puking may care to revise their opinion after they see a puppet do it.

DONNIE DARKO: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT

✪✪✪✪✪

Re-released in expanded form last summer, writer/director Richard Kelly's high-school-flick-meets-sci-fi-phantasmagoria still didn't get the audience it deserved. So this is probably your last chance to help elevate the Jake Gyllenhaal–starring head-trip from cult classic to genuine accounting-department-pleasing success. Includes additional scenes plus the featurette *The Cult of Donnie Darko*.

HALF BAKED: FULLY BAKED EDITION

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOME VIDEO

✪✪✪

"Marijuana is not a drug. I used to suck dick for coke. Now *that's* an addiction." Like most stoner movies, *Half Baked* is more quotable than watchable. But this cult tale of jazz cigarette aficionados turning into full-on weed sellers to rescue a pal from jail does have the great benefit of starring Dave Chappelle, who also wrote the script. And for those few purchasers straight enough to operate their DVD player's "menu" option, this edition includes deleted scenes and an alternate ending.

THE GRUDGE

COLUMBIA TRISTAR HOME ENTERTAINMENT

✪✪✪

Maybe it's because we've seen Sarah Michelle Gellar kick so much supernatural butt on *Buffy*, but the former vampire slayer is desperately unconvincing as a damsel in distress in this remake of the Japanese horror flick *Ju-on*. However, director Takashi Shimizu keeps the scares coming thick and fast, aided by the movie's jarringly nonlinear plot structure and ace central conceit of having ghostly nastiness spread through Tokyo like a virus. Includes a making-of documentary.

I ♥ HUCKABEES

FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT

✪✪✪

David O. Russell's philosophically inclined comedy is to be applauded for its inventiveness, visual panache and all-around screw-you-Hollywood weirdness. *Rushmore*'s Jason Schwartzman stars as an eco-campaigner who enlists a pair of existential detectives (Lily Tomlin and Dustin Hoffman) to find out why he keeps on seeing the same stranger around town. Along the way, big questions are tackled, but not, strangely, the most important one: How is a film that boasts the talents of Naomi Watts, Jude Law and Isabelle Huppert ultimately stolen by … Marky Mark?

KELLY'S HEROES

WARNER HOME VIDEO

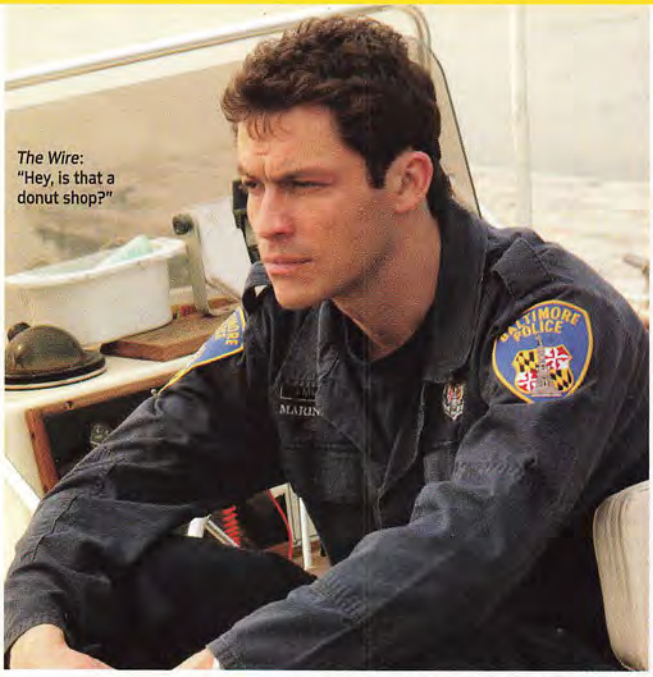
✪✪✪✪

And, speaking of David O. Russell, his last movie, *Three Kings*, both ripped off and improved on this WWII heist movie. But the 1970 original still remains so utterly enjoyable that, given the setting, you almost

The Grudge: Buffy the door-opener.

I ♥ Huckabees: The Funky Bunch have not aged well.

TEAM AMERICA: MELINDA SUE GORDON; THE GRUDGE: TAKASHI SEIDA; I ♥ HUCKABEES: COURTESY FOX SEARCHLIGHT



The Wire: "Hey, is that a donut shop?"

feel guilty watching. Clint Eastwood and Donald Sutherland star as, respectively, the disgraced soldier attempting to steal a load of behind-enemy-lines gold and the anachronistic hippie tank commander who, when not avoiding "negative waves," helps him.

THE WIRE: THE COMPLETE SECOND SEASON

HBO VIDEO

★★★★★

With a dream team of writers that includes crime scribe George Pelecanos and *Clockers* novelist Richard Price, this HBO series probing the symbiotic relationship between Baltimore cops and the drug dealers who bedevil them is consistently as good as *The Sopranos*, with none of its marinara bloat. Season two follows Don-Quixote-with-a-badge Jimmy McNulty (Dominic West) as he investigates the case of 13 luckless prostitutes who are found dead in a shipping container.

THE CORPORATION

ZEITGEIST FILMS

★★★★

THE YES MEN

MGM HOME ENTERTAINMENT

★★★

If a foreign dictator warped children's minds, privatized rainwater and caused a "cancer epidemic" there would be calls to bomb the bejeezus out of him. Yet, *The Corporation* brilliantly argues, American companies not only do these things—they do them *legally*. *The Yes Men*, meanwhile, tracks a band of anti-corporate pranksters who spend their time pretending to be World Trade Organization representatives at international economic conferences. Which sounds like a bit of a snooze, until you see them describing how "post-consumer byproducts" (i.e., shit) can be recycled into McDonald's burgers, or demonstrating how a giant gas-filled penis can be used to discipline workers at long distance.

BLENDER APPROVED

The best DVDs of the past months

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOME VIDEO

Billy Bob Thornton's toupee is the only unrealistic thing about this great high school football drama.

RIDING GIANTS

COLUMBIA TRISTAR HOME ENTERTAINMENT

Dude! Stacy Peralta's epic history of big-wave surfing will have you waxing the kitchen table.

THE WIRE: LARRY RILEY/HBO; FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS: COURTESY UNIVERSAL PICTURES; RIDING GIANTS: COURTESY SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

MUSIC DUDs

BY LAUREN HARRIS AND CLARK COLLIS

The Libertines: "Do *not* give this man smack!"

RADIOHEAD

THE MOST GIGANTIC LYING MOUTH OF ALL TIME

W.A.S.T.E.

★★★

Ever sit around late at night listening to *OK Computer* and wondering what kind of warped craziness Radiohead would broadcast if "the Man" ever let them have their own TV station? Well, wonder no more, you crazy bastard. This DVD boasts four episodes that were intended for broadcast in England on a sadly aborted Radiohead Internet channel. Cigarette-smoking dolls and skinned dogs play their respective parts, along with animated shorts, rehearsal footage and interview snippets. In turn freakish, thought-provoking and nicely droll, *Lying Mouth* also features a dozen previously unreleased tracks.

SCISSOR SISTERS

WE ARE SCISSOR SISTERS ... AND SO ARE YOU

UNIVERSAL

★★★

Strutting shirtless (and sometimes pantsless) through this concert in Brighton—the UK's mecca of seaside debauchery—NYC's fabulous Scissor Sisters are the gayest thing to hit England since, well, the English. The extras show their quieter side, as when frontman Jake Shears recites Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" like the coolest kindergarten teacher you never had. *JOSH EELLS*

CROSBY, STILLS & NASH

THE DVD COLLECTION

RHINO

★★★

Definitively answering the question "How much live CSN is too much live CSN?", this box set boasts a 1983 show, an acoustic gig from 1991 and a compilation of the harmonizing hippies' greatest live moments. The latter is the best, featuring rare material from Woodstock and footage of swimming whales (either that, or it's David Crosby taking a bath).

THE LIBERTINES

BOYS IN THE BAND

ROUGH TRADE

★★★★

The Libertines, fronted by Pete Dougherty and Carl Barat, the strung-out-and-punk Lennon and McCartney, take their rag-tag psychodrama onstage for 2002's incandescent *Up the Bracket* tour. Off-stage, there's Dougherty painting his fingernails, all-band van singalongs and illuminating interviews on their early nursing-home gigs and Pete's former career as a gravedigger. Helpful subtitles provided.

JOHNNY CASH

THE MAN, HIS WORLD, HIS MUSIC

SANCTUARY

★★★

This stately late-'60s documentary is a treasure chest of live, backstage and general mooching-about footage—one that would later be raided by director Mark Romanek for 2003's "Hurt" video. Rather less treasurable, however, is the sight of a down-on-the-farm Cash poking the ass of an, uh, ass.

HILARY DUFF

LEARNING TO FLY

HOLLYWOOD

ANGST-FREE ADOLESCENT

★★

MTV Cribs meets *Teen Vogue* in this "behind the scenes" look at the life of the youthful nova. What passes for intimacy is a comprehensive look at her vast closet and the "Fly" video shoot ("darker, like a really inspiring song," she explains). Bonus revelation: Ms. Duff really, like, likes to say "like." Like, a lot.

Hilary Duff: "I call this my 'thinking cap.'"

George Lucas's anti-bootlegging strategy was harsh but effective.

DROID RAGE

Battle the dark side of the *Star Wars* galaxy with a crackerjack squad of killer clones. BY JONAH WEINER AND GABE SORIA

STAR WARS: REPUBLIC COMMANDO

LUCASARTS—XBOX, PC

✪✪✪✪

BEFORE THE 1997 re-release of the *Star Wars* trilogy, George Lucas made a few alterations, mostly to preserve continuity with other episodes. One change, though, was made entirely on ethical grounds: In the original *Episode IV*, Han Solo blows away the bounty hunter Greedo without warning. In Lucas's new version, Greedo draws first.

Trigger-happy Jedi dorks will be pleased to learn they're under no such moral imperative in this chaotic shoot-'em-up. In *Republic Commando*, which fits in the storyline between *Episode II* and *Episode III*, you lead a unit of Navy SEAL-like clone troopers creatively named Delta Squad. Your mission is to wipe out insurgent groups corrupted by the Dark Side, and while any jingoistic undertones are probably coincidental—this game was put into development more than a year ago, and the planet Kashyyyk is many light-years from Fallujah—it's a plot Donald Rumsfeld could get behind.

The game's chief innovation is the ease with which you can send A.I. teammates on independent tasks (clearing a room of homicidal droids, obliterating obstacles, reviving fallen friends) and the cunning with which they carry them out. As you progress, you can retrieve enemy weapons and switch your assault rifle to "sniper" or "armor-piercing" settings. Along the way, you're assisted by hulking Wookiees that make Chewbacca look like a drowned rat. There's also a "death match" mode, in which you can hunt your own friends, and an online function in which you can team up with pals. This team-leading function should be good training for the game's challenging story mode, or at least a night-manager position at Staples.

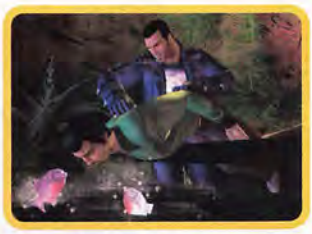
IT'S A PLOT RUMSFELD COULD GET BEHIND.

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY

SONY, PS2

✪✪✪

A convoluted noir set in London, *Black Monday* seems a little too desperate in its attempts to convince players that England has streets as mean as America's. We get it! You make better tea than us Yanks, you invented sarcasm and you know your way around semiautomatic weaponry. This game has all the local color of *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* (an obvious inspiration) but lacks its sense of humor.



THE PUNISHER

THQ, PS2, XBOX

✪✪✪

Hey, remember that awesome movie based on the ultraviolent Marvel Comics vigilante? Uh, neither do we. Fortunately, the makers of *The Punisher* have gone back to the character's comic-book roots and made an adventure game that's ambitiously sadistic. Need information from a mob flunkie? Hold his head over a wood chipper and watch him squeal. Not for the faint of heart or gamers with nagging consciences.

PSYCHONAUTS

MAJESCO, XBOX

✪✪✪✪

At a summer camp for preteen psychics training to become "psychonauts" (sort of like forest rangers of the mind), players travel a dreamscape that owes debts to Disney cartoons and the films of Tim Burton and David Cronenberg. These influences mesh together surprisingly well. A delightfully strange concept, gorgeous graphics and a clever script make *Psychonauts* a contender for game of the year.

BACKYARD WRESTLING 2: THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD

EIDOS, PS2, XBOX

✪✪

A wrestling game featuring porn stars and perennial *Blender* punching bags the Insane Clown Posse has to be dreadful, right? Surprisingly, *Backyard Wrestling 2* isn't a total bag of crap. The execution is crude, but watching rocker Andrew WK subdue an even-uglier-than-in-real-life Shaggy 2 Dope with a weed-whacker has its charms. Terrible, but actually kinda fantastic, too—it's fanterrible!

BLENDER APPROVED

The best games of the past months

NBA STREET V3

EA, PS2, XBOX

Build a ghetto court and play as the Beastie Boys in the latest installment of the street-ball franchise.

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER

KONAMI, PS2

Intense stealth action in the jungle ... and you play a guy with the porntastic name of Naked Snake.

touching is good.

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

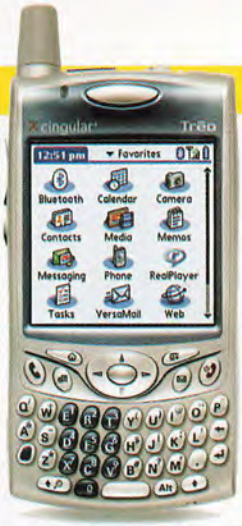
Trick out your ride with the tip of your finger. Touch, control, customize and race the ultimate street machines.

NINTENDO DS™

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

EA GAMES

© 2005 Electronic Arts Inc. Electronic Arts, EA, EA games, EA Games logo and Need for Speed are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. All rights reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. EA Games™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand. TM, ® and the Nintendo DS logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2005 Nintendo. Game and Nintendo DS sold separately. www.nintendods.com



WIN THIS THINGY!

Are you still using your cellphone just for calls? Just fill out the right answers to this crossword puzzle for your chance to win a PalmOne Treo 650. You can check e-mail, capture video and listen to MP3s. Did we mention you can also make calls?

PENCIL ME IN

Hey, it's *Blender*'s crossword! Starring 14 down!

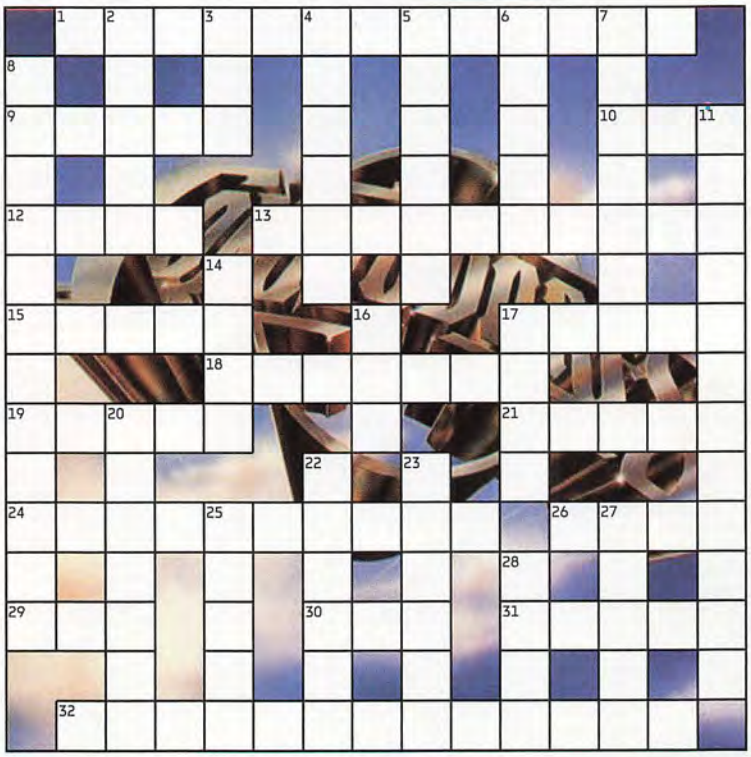
BY BRENDAN QUIGLEY

ACROSS

1 These emo kids want you to take their pain away (three words)
9 "Ebony and ____" (1982 hit)
10 John Lydon's post-Pistols project (abbr.)
12 Type of song 9 across is
13 Chrissie Hynde–led band
15 Baker who was givin' you the best that she got
17 "Fabled" indie rapper ___ Rock
18 Bad-acting icon who covers Pulp's "Common People"
19 Motörhead frontman
21 R&B crooner who begged you to let him love you in 2004
24 You owe these Canadian dance rockers an I.O.U. (three words)
26 Homme or Groban
29 Trent Reznor's band, for short
30 Rock producer Ocasek
31 G sharp's equivalent (two words)
32 Religious icon Marilyn Manson wants to be, at least in a recent cover (two words)

DOWN

2 "____ I die before I get old" (two words)
3 Rod Stewart's Maggie
4 What an audience demands at the end of a concert
5 Superfast "Kamikaze" rapper
6 Glass object on the White Album
7 The Shins sang about kissing the _____
8 Teen actress with 2004 album *Speak* (two words)
11 Welsh nü-metallers on the last train home (two words)
14 "____ Like Sunday Morning"
16 Alternative trio with '80s hit "Dear God"
17 "____ of Me" (Björk)
20 Dark spot where Franz Ferdinand likes to meet
22 The Osbournes' matriarch
23 Rapper Dizzee
25 Brit band who want you to be here now
27 2004 Ashanti ballad (two words)
28 Dr. Dre's protégé Jayceon Taylor, a.k.a. The ____



→ Send your completed puzzle to *Blender* Puzzle Contest, 1040 Avenue of the Americas, 22nd floor, New York, NY 10018

ROUND 1 NELLY VS. *BLENDER*

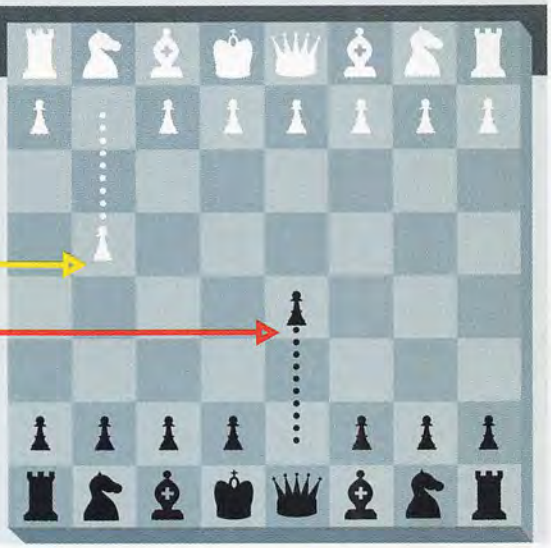
POP STARS ARE good at having sex and taking drugs. But how good are they at chess? *Blender* decided to find out by challenging the whole damn lot of them to a game. Renowned playa—and player—Nelly makes the first move ....

NELLY'S MOVE
"THE KING'S KNIGHT'S PAWN TWO SPACES TO FREE UP THE BISHOP."

BLENDER'S MOVE
"THE QUEEN'S PAWN TWO SPACES TO GRAB THE CENTER."

Four-time World Chess Champion **Susan Polgar** says:
(ON NELLY) "Not a popular first move: It doesn't control the center."
(ON *BLENDER*) "Very good move as it allows the bishop to attack the pawn."

NEXT MONTH: MOBY!



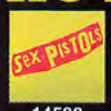
NELLY: STEPHEN LOVEKIN/FILMMAGIC.COM

BLENDER (ISSN 1534-0554) volume 4, number 3 is published monthly with a combined issue in January/February by Dennis Publishing Inc., 1040 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10018. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send change of address to *Blender*, P.O. Box 420234, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. One-year subscription rates: for U.S. $15.94, for Canada $25.94, for all other countries $35.94 in prepaid U.S. funds. Printed in the U.S.A.

RINGTOPIA

EXPANDING YOUR MOBILE UNIVERSE

HOT TONES FOR YOUR MOBILE PHONE



14588

14507

12960

14516

14584

14583

14502

14580

14585

14599

14514

14592

14513

14590

14509

FREE RINGTONE!

TEXT THE 5 DIGIT DOWNLOAD CODE TO 77000 AND GET A FREE TONE OR WALLPAPER PLUS A HOT, BRAND NEW TONE EACH WEEK FROM MANY OF TODAY'S HOTTEST ARTISTS!*

SEE DETAILS BELOW

14495

14525

14591

14521

14506

14497

14579

14518

14586

14581

14522

14587

14505

14600

14496

TOP 20 POLY DOWNLOADS

14459 The Game - How we Do
14455 Nelly / Tim McGraw - Over and Over
14447 Green Day - Blvd of Broken Dreams
14449 Keane - Somewhere Only We Know
14460 Game Theme - Super Mario Bros
14457 Snoop - Drop it Like it's Hot
14461 Trick Daddy - Let's Go
14452 Ludacris - Get Back
14450 Lil Jon - What you gonna do?
14451 Lil Wayne - Go DJ
14453 Luniz - I Got Five On It
14456 Snoop - Gin and Juice
14454 N.O.R.E. - Oye Mi Canto
14458 Sublime - Santeria
14445 2Pac - California Love
14463 Usher - Yeah
14464 War - Low Rider
14462 Usher / Alicia Keys - My Boo
14446 Ciara - 1,2 Step
14448 Jet - Cold Hard Bitch

REAL SOUND FX

14491 Hooker
14489 Female Pleasure
14487 Explosions
14492 Lots of Shooting
14494 Urban Scene
14488 Farts
14485 Bong Hit w/Exhale
14490 Female Screams
14493 Police Siren
14486 Dog Growling

NOW ONLY $1.99 TONES

VOICE TONES

14470 Pick up the Damn Phone
14469 Drama on the Line
14471 Sexy - Answer it Now Baby
14472 Sexy - Come On, Pick Up
Too Short
14474 I'm Rich, Bitch
14473 Answer your Pheazy
Bishop Don "Magic" Juan
14468 Why are you not answering?
14466 It's your loverman baby
14465 Don't Answer That
14467 It's Your Mother

TEXT ME I'M WAITING
TEXT HOT SINGLES
TEXT: DATE TO: 55777
FIND YOUR MATCH!
TEXT: BLENDER TO: 55777
CONNECT WITH REAL LOCAL GIRLS & GUYS ON YOUR PHONE!
99¢ PER MESSAGE RECEIVED SEE T&C FOR CARRIERS

SONG TONES™ IN THE STYLE OF...

14477 Green Day - Basket Case
14481 Modest Mouse - Float On
14476 Beyonce - Crazy in Love
14478 Jay-Z - 99 Problems
14479 Get Low - Lil Jon
14480 Missy Elliott - Work It
14482 Outkast - The Way You Move
14483 Snoop Dogg - Gin and Juice
14484 Usher Feat. Lil Jon - Yeah
14475 Al Green - Let's Stay Together

MAKE YOUR OWN TONE!

CALL THE NUMBER BELOW AND FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS!

1-206-456-RING

Only $2.99

GET IT 4 WAYS!

SELECT NEW TEXT MESSAGE FROM YOUR PHONE'S MAIN MENU
TYPE IN THE 5 DIGIT CODE AND SEND IT TO 77000
CHECK YOUR WAP PUSH INBOX FOR YOUR ORDER

Ringtone of The Week
Get a FREE tone or wallpaper along with a hot new release each week. Text the 5 digit download code of your FREE tone or wallpaper to 77000 to begin! See T&C for details.

Single Purchase
Text the 5 digit download code to number 99000 for one ringtone or wallpaper. Only $1.99 per order. Check your WAP Push Inbox for your content.

Order From Our Website
Visit us at www.ringtopia.com to view our massive library of ringtones, wallpapers, games, and services! Order using your credit card, paypal or with a check.

Order Using Your Home Phone
Call 1-900-945-7200, using a touch tone phone. Includes one ringtone and graphic. Just $4.95 per call.

COMPATIBLE WITH: cingular fits you best · AT&T Wireless · T-Mobile · Sprint · boost mobile · NEXTEL · POWERED

Terms & Conditions: Artist names are used for informational purposes only. SUBSCRIPTION BILLING (77000): Your weekly subscription for the NEWEST tones and papers will be automatically renewed if not unsubscribed. To unsubscribe please text STOP-TONES or STOPWALLPAPER to 77000. The rate for this service is $2.99 per week and will appear on your Cingular, AT&T, Nextel, Boost, Sprint or T-Mobile phone bill. NON-SUBSCRIPTION BILLING (99000): You will receive one product per order. A charge of $1.99 per ringtone or wallpaper will appear on your Cingular, AT&T, Boost, Sprint or T-Mobile phone bill. For customer support please contact support@ringtopia.com or call 206-838-0477. For terms and conditions go to www.ringtopia.com/terms.htm *Song Tones are cover songs. You will be billed a rate of $4.95 for 1 ringtone and wallpaper if you are using the 900 billing payment method. Text dating and text chat supports T-Mobile, AT&T, Sprint, Cingular, Verizon, All Tel, Nextel, Cincinatti Bell, and Boost. Please test your phone before you purchase. To test type TEST and send it to 99000.

15% Off EVERYTHING
T-Shirts Hoodies Ball Caps Posters Jewelry Leather Patches
Motley Crüe
Stickers Beanies Patches Work Shirts Long Sleeves Backwards Wallets
www.ROCKABILIA.com
Your Music Merchandise Source
Over 25,000 Items From Your Favorite Bands
For 15% off until May 31, 2005 use promotional code PC121. For free 80 page catalog call 952-556-1121 or write:
PO Box 39 Dept 390 • Chanhassen MN, 55317

THE BEST LOCAL CHATLINE!
Try it FREE!
1-888-243-9797
1-900-484-2525 50 min $25/call
www.questpersonals.com
QUEST PERSONALS™
CALL • CLICK • CONNECT™
No liability. 18+. Restrictions apply.

6 & 13 day cruises from $700
Look Who's On Deck
1 800 327-2601
www.windjammer.com
Windjammer Barefoot Cruises
P.O. Box 190120, Dept. 6192, Miami Beach Fl 33119

ELEVATORS®
WE CAN MAKE YOU TALLER! ELEVATORS® Height Increasing Shoes use a hidden height increasing feature inside the shoe. Up to 3" taller. 100 styles, Moneyback guarantee. Richlee Shoe Co.
1-800-343-3810 DEPT. MX 54

EXTREME WORKOUT
ONLY 30 MIN-PER-DAY:
- Build Muscle
- Tighten Abs
- Increase Strength
FROM: $199
SEE IT IN ACTION:
stimRx.com
800-573-8171
30 Day Money Back Guarantee

Feel the Power
PowerMEDICA
Human Growth Hormone
Nandrolone Decanoate
Hormone Replacement Therapy
Arimidex - HCG
Anadrol - Clomid
www.powermedica.com
Toll Free 866-340-6600

Mex Pharma.
BUYGHANDTEST.COM
Viagra, Nandrolone, WinV 20% - 90% OFF
$29.95 US - Mex Pharma Test has been said to be as good or better than all other brands.
$42.85 US - SyNTHeTEX GH Maximum strength Hormone saturation, commonly used with Mex Pharma Test.
*All prescriptions filled by a licensed pharmacy.
Could it be You?
Call (570) 222 4385
BUYGHANDTEST.COM
Priority add $10. VISA MasterCard OR C.O.D.
Order add $14.95 S+H - send to: Mex Pharma RR2 Box2390 Factoryville PA 18419

#1 TEXT CHAT SERVICE!!
1) Text the Word HONEY
2) Then send to this 5 digit #: 61000
ONLY $0.50
As Seen on TV!
IT'S EASY....
18+ ONLY
$0.50 per received msg + std msg fee

MAXIMIZE PERFORMANCE
- INCREASE MUSCLE MASS
- LOWER BODY FAT
- Human Growth Hormone
- Nandrolone Decanoate
- Viagra & Cialis
- Arimidex & HCG

*All prescriptions filled by a licensed USA pharmacy.

800.919.MEDX SAVE 10% Disc Code: BL01
WWW.MEDXLIFE.COM MEDX Life

SOLITUDE
18 dB NOISE CANCELLATION HEADSET
BETTERPERFORMANCE
BETTERPRICE
WWW.SOLITUDEHEADSETS.COM

poop 1952
berries/mud 1964
hair grease 1972
mousse 1984
M·PROFESSIONAL 2005
M PROFESSIONAL
HAIR CARE REVOLUTION
Better than the crap you use.
Premium Styling Products for Men.
Available At Most Drug Stores
Or Call 1.800.542.5903
For A Store Nearest You
www.mprofessional.com

America's Favorite Chatline™
Live links
CHATLINE
New York 646.507.5151
Los Angeles 323.558.1212
Philadelphia 215.825.6060
Chicago 312.261.6800
Denver 303.629.9999
San Diego 619.308.8880
Minneapolis 612.638.9999
Sacramento 916.340.1000
Baltimore 410.986.4300
Cleveland 216.626.2000
Dallas 214.379.0000
Detroit 313.668.1000
Phoenix 602.404.8500
Toronto 416.916.1111
Vancouver 604.257.5757
Find Your Local Number
1.800.210.1010
FREE to TRY
Use Trial Code 9990
Text the Word: DATE to 21010
Get Your Membership Billed Directly to Your Cell Phone!
www.Livelinks.com

What happens in VEGAS...
Happens with
vegasvip
your las vegas hookup!
bachelor bachelorette corporate
hotels . vip nightlife . stripclubs . golf
limousines . dining . shows . tours
1.800.VEGASVIP
www.vegasvip.com

Grow Taller
with
heightmax
Supplements for young adults
(For people ages 12 to 25)
www.heightmax.com
Rush me the following:
- 1 set of - US$ 64
- 3 sets of - US$ 192
- 6 sets of - US$ 345 (10% off)
-12 sets of - US$ 614 (20% off)
For international shipping - Please add US$14.99 & US$2 per add'l set.
Call 1-571-2432325 for credit card orders. Send this form w/ Check/Money Order to: SHN Tech Inc. Ste#1001, 8519 Artillery Rd, Manassas, VA 20110 USA

THE 49-YEAR-OLD PEROXIDE PUNKER HAS SPENT "MILLIONS" ON DRUGS AND WILL FIGHT YOU FOR YOUR PANTS. WHICH LEAVES JUST ONE QUESTION ...

BY ROB TANNENBAUM
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEGO

WHO DOES BILLY IDOL THINK HE IS?

FOR A GUY WHO CAN'T DRAW, THAT'S A PRETTY GOOD SELF-PORTRAIT.
I'm not very good at drawing, but I can kind of approximate my look: the hair sticking up, the curl of the lip. As long as you get that in, people will still go, "That's Billy Idol."

WHEN DID YOU START DYING YOUR HAIR?
When I was about 18. I used to do it black, and once as an accident, this girl dyed it orangey-blonde. I went to rehearsal, and the singer in my band was horrified. "You're gonna get rid of that hair." I thought, "I'm on the right thing if he doesn't like it, because I'm outshining him." Soon we threw him out and I became the singer.

WHOEVER HAS BETTER HAIR *SHOULD* GET TO SING. WHERE DOES YOUR FASHION SENSE COME FROM?
I loved Lou Reed, and he wore all leather in the mid-'70s. When I first started in punk rock, I wore jeans and sneakers. Then I had this huge fistfight with my manager over getting a pair of leather trousers, because we had no money. "I'll fucking kill you for them." I lost the fight, but I got the trousers. And wore them for six months without taking them off.

DID THEY SMELL BAD?
It was the height of punk rock, 1977. Everything was smelly!

OTHER THAN LEATHER PANTS, WHAT DO YOU SPEND TOO MUCH MONEY ON?
It used to be drugs. Actually, I never spent *too much*—I spent the right amount. And I'm still buying pot. Oops! Should I say that? I've spent a fortune on drugs, it has to be a few million dollars. We were doing drugs to get near the music, but the drugs got in the way of the music.

WE'RE DOING THIS INTERVIEW AT A BONDAGE CLUB. INTERESTED?
Anybody over 30 who's English is kinky. I am, anyway. I'll play along.

WARREN ZEVON ONCE SAID, "BILLY IDOL IS ONE OF THE GREAT SONGWRITERS. I MEAN THAT." SHOULD PEOPLE TAKE YOU MORE SERIOUSLY?
Most people don't ever talk about my songwriting, which is sad, really. When I listen to other people's versions of my songs, I'm always missing me. They've got everything right, except they don't know what the lyrics are about.

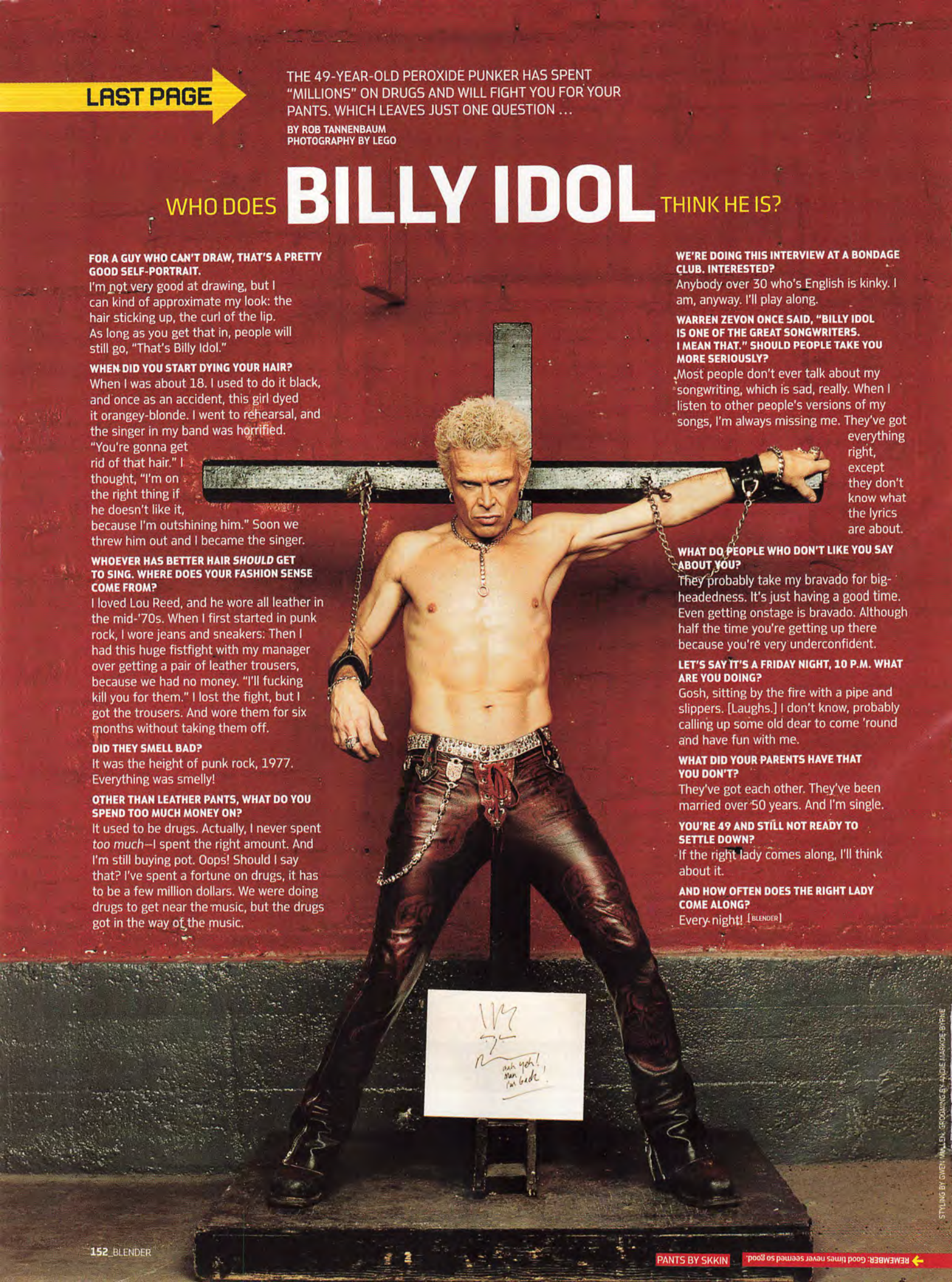
WHAT DO PEOPLE WHO DON'T LIKE YOU SAY ABOUT YOU?
They probably take my bravado for big-headedness. It's just having a good time. Even getting onstage is bravado. Although half the time you're getting up there because you're very underconfident.

LET'S SAY IT'S A FRIDAY NIGHT, 10 P.M. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
Gosh, sitting by the fire with a pipe and slippers. [Laughs.] I don't know, probably calling up some old dear to come 'round and have fun with me.

WHAT DID YOUR PARENTS HAVE THAT YOU DON'T?
They've got each other. They've been married over 50 years. And I'm single.

YOU'RE 49 AND STILL NOT READY TO SETTLE DOWN?
If the right lady comes along, I'll think about it.

AND HOW OFTEN DOES THE RIGHT LADY COME ALONG?
Every night! [BLENDER]



As low as 83¢ an Issue!

☐ 24 ISSUES JUST $19.97 — ONLY **83¢ AN ISSUE**

☐ 12 ISSUES JUST $11.97 — ONLY $1.00 AN ISSUE

← BEST DEAL

NAME _____ (Please Print)

ADDRESS _____ APT.

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP

6504SA

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me later

Canadian orders, add $10 per year in U.S. funds (inc. GST). Foreign orders, add $20 per year in U.S. funds. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery of first issue. Annual cover price is $43.89. Blender is published 11 times per year.

BLENDER

As low as 83¢ an Issue!

☐ 24 ISSUES JUST $19.97 — ONLY **83¢ AN ISSUE**

☐ 12 ISSUES JUST $11.97 — ONLY $1.00 AN ISSUE

← BEST DEAL

NAME _____ (Please Print)

ADDRESS _____ APT.

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP

6504SB

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me later

Canadian orders, add $10 per year in U.S. funds (inc. GST). Foreign orders, add $20 per year in U.S. funds. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery of first issue. Annual cover price is $43.89. Blender is published 11 times per year.

BLENDER

Visit our website at www.blender.com

NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 288 FLAGLER BEACH FL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

BLENDER
PO BOX 421252
PALM COAST FL 32142-7600

Visit our website at www.blender.com

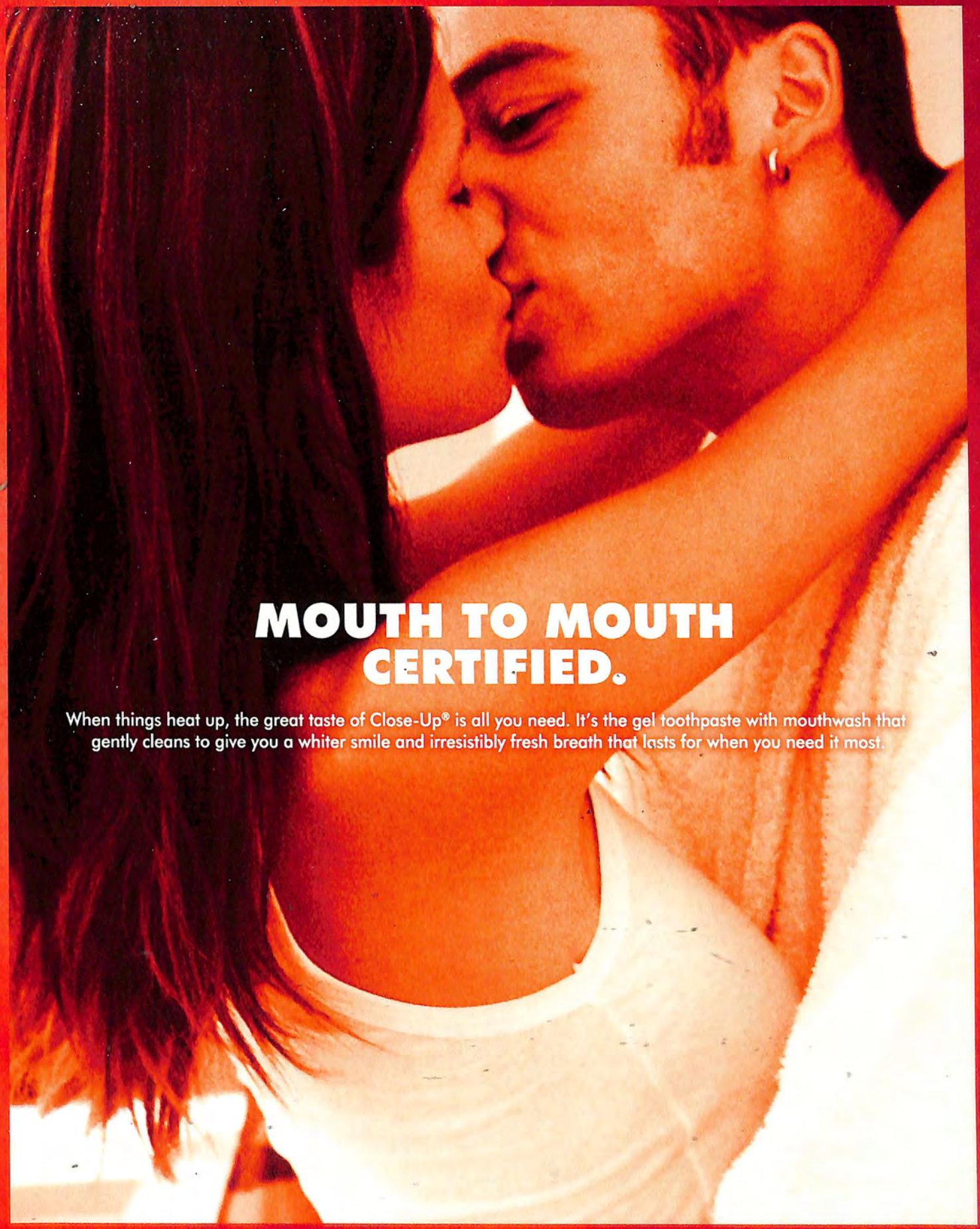
NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 288 FLAGLER BEACH FL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

BLENDER
PO BOX 421252
PALM COAST FL 32142-7600

THE ULTIMATE MUSIC MAGAZINE
MAXIM
A VERY SPECIAL TV ISSUE!
BLEN
THE ULTIMATE MUSIC MAGAZINE
CHICKEN? TUNA? WHO CARES!
JESSICA SIMPSON
QUEEN OF THE SMALL SCREEN
PAUSE! REWIND! REPEAT!
25 SEXIEST MUSIC MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY!
WHEN WILL KEITH RICHARDS DIE?
FIND OUT, p041
KID ROCK
"I GET PAID TO DRINK BEER!"
INCUBUS ★ COURTNEY LOVE ★ SIMON FULLER ★ JET ★ NORAH
Subscribe now and
Save BIG!


MOUTH TO MOUTH
CERTIFIED.
When things heat up, the great taste of Close-Up® is all you need. It's the gel toothpaste with mouthwash that gently cleans to give you a whiter smile and irresistibly fresh breath that lasts for when you need it most.
THE TASTE THAT HEATS THINGS UP
CLOSE-UP

Honda Civic Tour presents Maroon 5.

Expect some electricity in the air.

With songs like *This Love* and *Sunday Morning*, it's clear that Maroon 5 cares about music. But did you know they're also passionate about the environment? Which is why they wanted to be part of the Honda Civic Tour. As part of the tour, Maroon 5 got to customize a Civic Hybrid. That's the Ultra-Low-Emission gas/electric car from Honda. They also unleashed their creativity on the efficient Civic Coupe. To see the customized cars, and for details about when Maroon 5 is coming to your town, go to hondacivictour.com. And get ready for an electric evening.

March 11	Los Angeles, CA	April 1	Philadelphia, PA	April 22	Milwaukee, WI
March 13	Los Angeles, CA	April 2	Boston, MA	April 23	Minneapolis, MN
March 18	Corpus Christi, TX	April 4	Amherst, MA	April 25	Lincoln, NE
March 19	Dallas, TX	April 6	New York, NY	April 26	Denver, CO
March 21	Atlanta, GA	April 7	New York, NY	April 29	Portland, OR
March 22	Charlotte, NC	April 8	New York, NY	April 30	Seattle, WA
March 24	Miami, FL	April 14	Detroit, MI	May 4	Fresno, CA
March 25	Tampa, FL	April 15	Pittsburgh, PA	May 5	San Francisco, CA
March 26	Orlando, FL	April 16	Columbia, MD	May 6	Sacramento, CA
March 28	Norfolk, VA	April 18	Cleveland, OH	May 8	Anaheim, CA
March 29	Harrisburg, PA	April 19	Chicago, IL	May 9	San Diego, CA
March 31	Pittsburgh, PA	April 21	St. Louis, MO	May 11	Phoenix, AZ

Honda civictour.com

HONDA

© 2005 American Honda Motor Co., Inc.